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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 67/NO. 23 JULY 7, 2003

INSIDE

Special Forces commander named U.S. army chief of staff

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Racist cop brutality sparks outrage in Michigan town

Benton Harbor residents condemn police for death of Black motorist

BY ILONA GERSH

BENTON HARBOR, Michigan—In mid-June this town in southwestern Michigan was the scene of angry protests against racist police policies that resulted in the death of 28-year-old Terrance "T-shirt" Shurn. The young African-American man died around 2:00 a.m. on June 16 when his motorcycle crashed into an abandoned house after city cops pursued him at more than 100 miles an hour.

Benton Harbor, with 11,000 residents, has wide streets full of potholes. Boarded-up stores and closed businesses line Main Street. Everywhere there are vacant lots and abandoned houses. Ninety-two percent of the residents are Black. The official unemployment rate is nearly 10 percent, but Black ministers state the true figure is higher. Some 40 percent live below the official poverty level, and the median annual family income is $17,471. Only 60 percent of adults have graduated from high school.

Just across St. Joseph's River from Benton Harbor is the town of St. Joseph. The two are dubbed the "Twin Cities," yet there is not much resemblance between them. The neighboring town has clean streets edged with well-kept lawns and flowers. The population there is 90 percent white. Unemployment stands at 2 percent. The median family income is $38,000, with only 4 percent below the poverty level. Ninety percent have graduated from high

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Above, sheriff's deputies stand with armored vehicle in Benton Harbor, Michigan, June 18. Death of Terrance Shurn in high-speed police chase sparked widespread outrage and antiracist protests. The local cops were reinforced by Michigan state police and National Guard. Right, resident at June 20 meeting in Benton Harbor community center at which Democratic Party politician Jesse Jackson spoke. In addition to Shurn, sign lists Arthur Partee, who died in April at the hands of cops, and Trenton Patterson, 11, a bystander who was killed during cop chase in September 2000.

U.S. gov't tightens noose around Iran, using report of UN nuclear agency

Student protests in Iran push for democratic freedoms

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Under heavy pounding from Washington, and with increasing pressure from all the other imperialist powers, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued a sharp declaration accusing Iran of going around provisions of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). After three days of deliberations at its Vienna board of governors meeting, which concluded June 19, the United Nations agency also demanded that Iran "promptly and unconditionally" sign an additional protocol permitting UN "inspectors" to carry out stricter surveillance of its nuclear facilities, including surprise visits.

Protests for basic rights undercut imperialism's designs on Iran

—See editorial, page 10

The IAEA decision was issued a day after U.S. president George Bush said that Washington would "not tolerate" an Iranian nuclear weapons program. Leading up to the Vienna meeting, the U.S. government had announced its goal of the IAEA declaring Iran in breach of the NPT, which Tehran has signed. Such a step would mean the issue would automatically be placed on the UN Security Council agenda for consideration of sanctions. Having pushed for what many in the bourgeois media described as unattainable, Washington laid the trap of making it seem that the IAEA rebuke was rather mild. But in fact Washington succeeded in tightening the noose further around Iran. The IAEA said Iran failed more than once to report facilities and activities related to its nuclear program, and demanded wider latitude in access to Iran's nuclear plants and related installations.

Immediately after the meeting, the U.S. ambassador to the IAEA, Kenneth Brill, stated, "I am very satisfied with the outcome today. We have an important message from the board that supports the U.S. position and concern about the Iranian program." Brill added that his government looks forward to the IAEA's next report on the issue, scheduled to be released in

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AP/Wide World Photos

Iranian students protesting arrests of organizers of demonstrations for democratic rights sit in parliament hall in Tehran June 22. Placards read, "We want freedom for those arrested," naming each of the students jailed by the police.

Calero begins international speaking tour in Houston

BY TONY DUTROW

HOUSTON—Supporters of the six-month campaign to stop the deportation of Róger Calero gathered at the Resurrection Church in Houston's Denver Harbor, one of this city's historic *barrios,* to welcome Calero back to Houston and to show that the lessons of his fight to end the government's campaign to deport him can be applied in other similar cases.

Fight like Calero, fight to win!

—See editorial, page 10

Calero, an editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language socialist monthly magazine published in New York, and a *Militant* staff writer, was seized by immigration agents at the Houston Intercontinental Airport Dec. 3, 2002. He was freed from immigration jail 11 days later after hundreds of messages of protest poured

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350 turn out for strike solidarity plant-gate rally at Tyson Foods

BY MAURICE WILSON

JEFFERSON, Wisconsin—"This is our strike, too," was a sentiment echoed by many unionists who rallied here in support of meat packers on strike against Tyson Foods. Some 350 people participated in the June 22 solidarity action at the plant gate called by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 538, whose members walked off the job four months ago.

The labor event was joined by members of the International Association of Machinists, United Auto Workers, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Service Employees International Union, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and other UFCW locals. A contingent of about 25 members of Local 60 of the American

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Canadian police frame up Sikhs for Air India crash

BY JOE YATES

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—The opening here April 28 of the trial of two men accused of responsibility in an Air India crash in 1985 marked a new stage in the police campaign of harassment of people of the Sikh religion or Punjabi origin in Canada. The two accused, Ajaib Singh Bagri, a woodworker from Kamloops, British Columbia, and Ripudamin Singh Malik, a businessman in Vancouver, are Sikh religious leaders.

Bagri is also a leader of Babbar Khalsa, a group that advocates independence for the Punjab, a state in northwest India. On June 18, the Canadian government banned Babbar Khalsa and the International Sikh World Federation as "terrorist" organizations.

On June 23, 1985, an Air India flight exploded near Ireland killing 329 people, mainly of Indian origin. The media widely proclaimed that a bomb explosion brought down the plane. But this assertion has never been proven.

In a report for Lloyds of London dated March 21, 1988, Eustace Roskill wrote, "None of the recovered parts of the aircraft showed any sign whatsoever of damage from explosives. None of the 131 bodies... showed any sign of death having been caused by explosive injuries or by shrapnel."

Bagri and Malik are also accused of responsibility in the death of two airport attendants who died when a bomb exploded at Tokyo's Narita airport on the same day as the Air India crash. They were originally arrested on Oct. 27, 2000, and have been held without bail ever since. It has taken two and a half years for the case to come to trial.

The charges against the defendants are based on hearsay evidence. The main witness against Malik is a woman who said that he confessed his involvement in the crash to her on more than one occasion. A witness who claims he heard Bagri also confess to the crime has been paid $300,000 to testify since he lives in the United States.

Another person accused in the Air India crash, Inderjit Singh Reyat, pleaded guilty to manslaughter on February 10 and was sentenced to five years in jail. The statement of fact in his conviction reads, "Reyat acquired various materials for the purpose of aiding others in the making of explosive devices.... he did not arm an explosive device, nor did he place an explosive device on an airplane, nor does he know who did or did not do so."

Reyat had previously been sentenced to 10 years in prison for manslaughter in the death of the two airport workers at the Narita airport. His conviction was based on circumstantial evidence. Just prior to his mandatory release for those charges, he was charged in the Air India case.

The Air India investigation was launched by Ottawa in the context of a big campaign by the Indian government against forces advocating independence for Punjab.

On June 5, 1984, there was an assault by the Indian army on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the most important Sikh holy site. Many hundreds of people died in the aftermath of the assault. As part of the reaction to this assault, India's prime minister at the time, Indira Ghandi, was assassinated Oct. 30, 1984, by her Sikh bodyguards. Following the killing, the Congress Party, which Ghandi led, organized the slaughter of thousands of Sikhs.

One example of police harassment was the treatment of Kulwarn Singh Parmar whose brother, Talwinder Singh Parmar, was a police suspect in the Air India crash. In 1992 Indian police killed Talwinder Singh Parmar after torturing him. In September 2002 Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers visited Kulwarn Singh Parmar at his workplace in Burnaby, a suburb of Vancouver, and offered him $1 million to testify in the Air India trial.

There have been many incendiary headlines in the newspapers about the Air India case. When Reyat was convicted the headline in the *Vancouver Sun* read "Killer of 329 makes deal."

The anti-Sikh campaign waged by the government has whipped up racist attitudes toward Punjabis. In 1998, Nirmal Singh Gill, a caretaker at a Sikh temple in Surrey, near Vancouver, was beaten to death by a group of racist skinheads. In response, 1,000 people rallied to protest this anti-immigrant attack.

In June 2002 Ian Bruce Josephson, a British Columbia Supreme Court judge, ruled that the rights of Bagri had been violated. The judge said the reason was that 70 percent of the tape recordings of phone calls by Talwinder Singh Parmars made by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) prior to the plane crash had been erased.

The last few weeks accusations have been swirling in the media that CSIS had advance information about the bombing through an informer. In documents released by the court, RCMP officers are quoted as saying this is why CSIS erased many tapes.

Workers in Germany protest benefit cuts

Workers protest plans by the German government to cut social benefits. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who heads a Social Democratic Party (SPD)-Green Party coalition government, is pushing ahead with plans to cut pensions, slash the maximum period during which laid-off workers can receive unemployment benefits, and make it easier for bosses to fire workers. He gained 90 percent support for the proposals from a special SPD conference in Berlin. Meanwhile, metal and auto workers continue their fight to extend the 35-hour working week, officially in place in western Germany, to workers in the east. Some 11,000 members of the IG Metall union have joined rolling strike actions in Berlin, Brandenburg, and Saxony since the first week of June. Bosses' representatives have whined that they will not be able to meet the demand until productivity levels are equalized across the country.

Welsh auto parts workers stand firm

BY ROSE KNIGHT AND PAUL DAVIES

CAERNARFON, Wales—"We've been on the picket line for two years now, so what's another five months," said Merion Hughes. He was speaking in response to an announcement by the industrial tribunal that it would wait until November to hear an appeal by Craig Smith, the owner of Friction Dynamics. Smith has challenged a tribunal decision that he unfairly dismissed 86 workers in the plant after they organized a strike to protest cuts in pay and working conditions.

Smith locked out the workers, who are members of the Transport and General Workers Union, after their walkout in April 2001. They have picketed the plant, which makes brakes and clutches for cars, since that time.

"He hasn't won anything, he's failed to break our spirit, and we have lasted far longer than he could have imagined," said Hughes, who worked at the plant for 38 years until he was locked out.

The plant is located just outside of Caernarfon in north Wales. It is operating in part with scab labor from the nearby towns of Bangor and Bethesda. Hughes said that the scabs had spoken on Welsh Radio recently, claiming that they had taken the jobs in order to keep work in Caernarfon and bemoaning the fact that the locked-out workers had won widespread local support, including from members of Parliament. There are constant rumors about the plant being closed, added Hughes. "No one wants the place to close," he said. "There isn't much work round here and it's pittance pay."

Union branches from around the country and internationally have given money and support. "Many of the original 86 have had to find other jobs since the lockout began," Hughes said. "Some are in their second or third job. This just shows the importance of our fight for union jobs—this is a small corner of north Wales with few well-paying jobs. There are 34 of us still picketing."

Pat Jones, a worker with 33 years' experience in the plant, said that local people had brought food parcels. "The local supermarket has a 'buy one, get one free' deal," she said. "For many local people it's become a 'buy one and give one to a striker' deal."

The workers plan to promote their struggle at a concert at Bethesda over the weekend of June 20–22. The concert, which is expected to draw thousands of young people, will commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the Penrhyn slate quarry workers strike. It will feature top Welsh band Super Furry Animals.

The quarry workers' strike was the longest running union battle of its time. It was provoked by the slate quarry bosses's refusal to let union representatives collect union dues from their members at the quarries.

Representatives of the locked-out workers at Friction Dynamics hope to address the audience at the concert. "We are fighting to defend our union, it's the same thing that quarry workers fought for one hundred years ago, against a boss who wants to keep us in 19th-century mill conditions," said Hughes.

THE MILITANT

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U.S. gov't molds 'mobile, agile' military

Appointment of army chief promotes role of Special Operations forces

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld has announced that a former head of Special Operations forces will serve as the new chief of the U.S. army. The appointment of retired Gen. Peter Shoomaker follows the promotion of the special forces to a key role in the military conquests of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Rumsfeld has been among the most outspoken champions of the enhanced role of the Green Berets, Delta Force, and Navy Seals in the U.S. military.

These moves are further signs that a revolution is under way in the organization of the U.S. military. They reflect the U.S. rulers' push for more mobile, less ponderous armed forces ready to move rapidly to areas of battle as U.S. imperialism needs.

The invasion of Iraq was a victory for the approach of the defense secretary and his supporters over their critics in the government and military brass. In that assault, U.S. Gen. Thomas Franks, the commander of the operation and another Rumsfeld ally, relied heavily on air power, laser- and satellite-guided bombs, and a ground army that was numerically small in comparison with the U.S.-led forces in the 1991 Gulf War. The U.S. and British units' rapid advance from Kuwait to northern Iraq in the face of a badly led and demoralized Iraqi army silenced those in Washington who said that the invading force was too small and lightly armed and would get bogged down.

Franks, who headed the U.S. Central Command recently and is retiring this summer, is being replaced by Lt. Gen. John Abizaid—dubbed the "Mad Arab" by his fellows in the military brass—who also played a major role in Washington's conquest of Iraq.

Following the war, U.S. president George Bush singled out the Special Operations Command for particular praise. Shoomaker headed the command for three years from 1997. He was stationed in Korea in the mid-1970s.

U.S. forces are redeployed

In keeping with the ongoing remolding of the armed forces for more frequent and far-flung aggression, U.S. officers have begun a significant redeployment of their troops in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas on the pretext of "fighting terrorism." The number of U.S. soldiers stationed in Germany will fall from almost 70,000 to as few as 15,000. Most will head east to Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania.

That will bring them closer to likely theaters of imperialist intervention in the Middle East, Africa, and Russia. "Why do we need a joint force to be in Germany, where there's nothing happening?" a senior military official told the *Los Angeles Times*. "You have to have troops close to ports and airfields that are closer to the action."

Navy Seals in operation in Panama, 1994. Special Forces play key role in a military configured for frequent deployment in defense of U.S. imperialism's interests.

The total U.S. forces in Europe were reduced from 300,000 to around 100,000 in the decade following the end of the Cold War.

In addition, Washington is moving troops south from the so-called demilitarized zone dividing the Korean peninsula, which takes them out of range of north Korean artillery in case of a military conflict with Pyongyang. The Pentagon is also probing to establish new bases in Australia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Vietnam, in addition to Japan and south Korea, where it has tens of thousands of troops.

Up until recently, some 80 percent of the 1.4 million U.S. troops were stationed in the United States, south Korea, and Germany.

In the Middle East, the U.S. military is pulling most of its 5,000-strong force out of Saudi Arabia, while reinforcing its presence in Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and now Iraq. Further east, thousands of troops are in Afghanistan and some 1,500 have been stationed in Kyrgyzstan, a former Soviet republic.

Meanwhile, under Washington's Plan Colombia, U.S. forces have been deployed in a number of Andean countries in Latin America under the guise of combating the drug trade and terrorism. It's an area of the world where the volcano of the class struggle is smoldering.

Court backs secret detentions by U.S. gov't

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

A federal court ruled June 17 that Washington may continue to withhold all information from the public about hundreds of immigrants picked up for alleged violations of U.S. immigration laws in the government's wave of post-9/11 arrests. In a 2-1 ruling, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia reversed the August 2002 decision of a lower court, which had ordered the government to release the names of the 762 detainees, as well as the names of their lawyers. The appeals court made the decision in *Center for National Security Studies vs. U.S. Department of Justice*, concluding that "national security" interests took precedence.

Judge David Sentelle wrote in the majority opinion that "the need for deference" to Washington's "anti-terrorism" campaign outweighs the dangers of the secret arrest and jailing of hundreds of individuals. "It is abundantly clear that the government's top counterterrorism officials are well suited to make this predictive judgment," he stated, because "America faces an enemy just as real as its former cold war foes."

Most of those detained were charged, after their arrest, with minor immigration infractions, such as remaining in the country with an expired visa.

The government argued that release of any information about those detained or their lawyers would hamper their "ongoing investigations" and "endanger the public safety" by allegedly increasing the chances of attacks on those detained. Feigning concern for the rights of those jailed secretly by the government, Justice Department lawyers also argued that by keeping secret the names and whereabouts of the prisoners they were protecting their "privacy."

The only Democratic Party–appointed judge on the appeals court, David Tatel, agreed with the court majority view that Washington was acting properly by "withholding *some* of the information" about those who had been jailed. "No one can doubt that uniquely compelling governmental interests are at stake" in its "anti-terrorism" roundups, he wrote in his "dissenting" opinion.

Tatel opposed the Republican judges' "uncritical deference" to government arguments. He stated that a blanket acceptance of the government's position "eviscerates" the Freedom of Information Act under which the case had been brought. He favored the withholding of the names and places of arrest of "some" of the detainees.

The appeals court decision follows a U.S. government announcement in early June that it plans to deport more than 13,000 men, mostly Arab and Muslim, who had complied with a federal order to submit to "special registration" proceedings.

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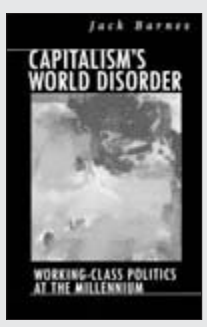

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Calero starts international tour in Houston

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into the Houston INS offices. Until May 22, he faced an exclusion order against him based on a 1988 plea-bargain marijuana conviction, in spite of the fact that he has been a permanent resident for 13 years.

Speaking in Spanish and English, meeting co-chair Henry Cooper, host of a local Spanish-language radio program and a state board member of the Green Party, opened the event, which was attended by about 35 people. "We are here in celebration of two victories: the May 22 decision that Calero is 'not deportable' and the June 9 conviction of three immigration cops in the murder of Serafín Olvera.

"These are victories for all immigrants and all working people," Cooper declared to loud applause.

Calero shared the platform with Martha Olvera who led a two year campaign to convict the immigration cops that killed her brother-in-law Serafín Olvera. Olvera, a national board member of the Calero defense committee, said, "We faced overwhelming odds in both of these cases. But our fight won out."

Calero thanked the participants for their part in the broad campaign of support around the country, particularly among working people who see their rights under attack. He described the strike by workers in Jefferson, Wisconsin, against Tyson Foods. "The meat packers there who are majority native-born workers identified with this fight and saw it as part of their battle against the giant meat packing company," he explained.

"I'm here today with information about Ciarán Ferry, being held without bond in the Denver County Jail," explained Rebekah Collins, as Calero, standing at her side, translated her message into Spanish.

"Ciarán was detained by INS agents on January 30 of this year when he attended a scheduled 'green card' interview in Colorado," she continued. "The official charge against Mr. Ferry involves 'overstaying his visa' although at the time of his interview, he was granted work authorization and permitted to stay in this country."

She explained that Ferry was formerly a political prisoner, imprisoned by the British authorities in the H-blocks of Long Kesh, Northern Ireland. "We are asking that he be released immediately so he may be with his family while he waits for an asylum hearing in August," said Collins to the applause of the audience.

Calero urged those present to support the campaign to release Ferry and announced that his international tour will include Canada, where Algerian immigrants are fighting deportation.

Houston City Councilwoman Ada Edwards, a committee endorser, sent a message to the meeting saying, "Congratulations on your recent victory! It is a testament to what organized people can do when we are willing to work hard to make sure justice is done. I want to thank Róger Calero for standing up for the rights of people who otherwise would not be heard as loudly through his work at *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant.* From the striking packinghouse workers in Wisconsin to the case of Serafín Olvera, his work has truly made a difference. I am gladdened by the news of the termination of his deportation order. I hope that at least in a small way my office was able to assist in these efforts."

In reading the message, Jacquie Henderson, a garment worker and organizer of the Houston Socialist Workers Party who also chaired the meeting, commented that, "It is fitting that Calero began his tour today on 'Juneteenth,' this day we celebrate when Union soldiers arrived in Texas June 19, 1865, to enforce the abolition of slavery."

Amelia Perez, who helped organize the Calero tour, announced "An Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride from Houston to Washington, D.C., and New York." She urged everyone help build the coast-to-coast caravan September 20–October 4.

One immigrant worker who brought his family to the meeting after seeing the TV coverage, commented in the discussion period, "We are proud of these victories—but they are not just victories for one group of immigrants but everyone."

Display tables at the meeting hall included ones from the Texas Green Party, Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, La Resistencia, Irish Northern Aid, Socialist Workers Party, Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, the fight for justice for Serafín Olvera, and the Calero defense committee. The meeting raised over $500 towards tour expenses and to begin a war chest for the Political Rights Defense Fund to come to the aid of others.

As soon as his plane landed Calero went to a live radio interview. The day before the meeting he participated in a press conference with the support of several immigrant rights activists. Two Spanish-language TV stations, Univisión and Telemundo, covered the visit, and the Spanish language daily *El Día* announced the event.

Calero was invited to a meeting at the Mexican Consulate with representatives of Houston community organizations where his remarks summarizing his fight received enthusiastic applause.

"I saw the report on your case on the Telemundo news broadcast last night," said a sewing machine operator greeting Calero as he met workers at the gate to a Houston garment factory early in the morning June 19. "Congratulations! I will try to make it to the meeting tonight."

Most workers stopped to take a flyer for the evening meeting and to talk with Calero as he was introduced by one of their coworkers. A few came back to the gate after parking their cars to continue the discussions and shake Calero's hand in support.

"I have been following the campaign in your magazine," said another sewer driving into work. "It's good for all of us that you have won."

Tyson strike rally

Continued from front page

Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees from Madison, Wisconsin, came to support the strikers.

Despite the blazing hot sun the crowd was spirited. Twice vehicles carrying scabs approached the edge of the crowd, drawing pickets' attention. The first vehicle went through into the plant, while the second vehicle was turned back as strikers chanted "Scab! Scab!" and then "Union! Union!"

"We were here when you walked out and will be here when you walk back in. This struggle is for every worker in the United States," said Jim Cavanaugh, president of the South Central Federation of Labor. "Your fight is our fight," Randy Belliel, of the UFCW Northern Joint Council in Canada, said from the speakers platform. "What happens here happens everywhere." He noted that a UFCW truck started in Canada, picked up products from upstate New York and eventually brought in 13 tons of food for the strikers' families.

The rally was chaired by Mike Rice, president of UFCW Local 538. Other speakers included union officials, U.S. senator Russell Feingold and other Democratic Party politicians, and a representative of the Green Party.

"We are with you today in your strike," said José González, a member of UFCW Local 271 who works on the kill floor at the Swift plant in Omaha, Nebraska, where workers won their first contract eight months ago. He spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated into English by another member of his local. The crowd gave him a big round of applause after he spoke about a strike in his native Colombia, where telecommunications workers stayed out for five months before winning their fight. He mentioned that for its next union meeting his local had "invited Róger Calero to speak about the victory in his fight against the repression of all immigrants in the United States." Calero, associate editor of the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* and staff writer for the *Militant,* was successful in stopping an effort by the U.S. immigration police to deport him. He told the rally, "My victory came as a result of reaching out to fighters like you."

After the demonstration one of the strikers, Mike French, spoke about discussions with members of UFCW Local 271 in Omaha that led to Local 538's Truth Squad planning a trip to Nebraska. "This is the first Truth Squad trip in a while," said French. "There will be just one visit in Omaha because we've been cutting back" on Truth Squad road trips.

Militant/Jacob Perasso

Some 350 people joined June 22 union rally. "This is our strike, too," many said.

"This visit is very important," he added, "to show them support as a newly formed union. They showed us support and we're going there to thank them."

The Truth Squads that were organized last March and April collected thousands of dollars in donations to help sustain the strikers. The local has also set up a Hardship Committee that assists workers with their mortgages, rent, and medical bills. Kurt Kernan, a member of the committee, noted that more strikers are asking for assistance as they enter their fourth month on the picket line against the world's largest processor and marketer of chicken, beef, and pork.

Last year the meat giant reported a gross income of $23 billion. The corporation has about 120,000 employees in 300 facilities located in 29 states and 22 countries. Workers at the Jefferson processing plant produce pepperoni, ham, and salami. On February 28, for the first time in the plant's history, they went on strike, rejecting the company's contract offer. The company is demanding a two-tier wage scale that slashes hourly pay for new hires to $9.00 an hour from $11.09, and that freezes pay for others over four years. The company is also demanding the elimination of pensions for new hires and of health-care supplements for retirees, among other concessions

Several strikers described how the company sought to foster divisions among them leading up to the walkout. One crew leader, a Mexican worker, became a supervisor two weeks before the strike. "She started telling us that if there is a strike we would have to cross the picket line," said Cervando Jiménez, also from Mexico, who has worked in the plant for nearly three years. "We told her 'no,' that we can't cross a picket line. After the strike began she even started calling people at their homes."

Mexican-born workers, who make up 10 percent of the plant's workforce of 477, have not crossed the picket line. So far only three people who worked in the plant prior to the strike have reportedly gone back to work.

Cop brutality sparks outrage in Michigan

Continued from front page

school or college. Much of the land surrounding the Twin Cities is unincorporated Benton Township, with a mostly white population.

In 1971, U.S. District Court judge Douglas Hilman ruled in favor of a NAACP-initiated lawsuit against the segregated public school system in Benton Harbor, and 10 years later ordered the city to begin a voluntary school busing plan. He released the city from court supervision in 2002, and the busing program was shut down.

"They call this the Twin Cities," Willie Young told the *Detroit News* in an interview published June 22. He gestured toward a street corner filled with rubble and the empty foundations of two abandoned houses burned the previous week. "If I had a twin that looked like this, I don't want it."

How police provoked trouble

On the morning of June 16, friends and neighbors gathered at the site of Shurn's death with candles to create a memorial. Evette Taylor, who lives nearby, said she and other people had been putting flowers and other items at the motorcycle crash site and trying to grieve Shurn's death when police told them to move. "He was a sweet person, and he didn't deserve to die this way," she said.

Residents angered by police abuse and racism crowded into the regularly scheduled City Commission meeting that evening. They condemned the police practice of conducting high-speed chases within residential neighborhoods. At one point, the crowd shouted down Police Chief Samuel Harris. "The chief ain't from here," one man yelled, according to the June 17 *Herald Palladium*. "He don't know nothin'." "We don't need no chief," another said, "we can chief ourselves." Harris and Benton Harbor mayor Charles Yarbrough passed responsibility for the death onto Benton Township police.

Benton Harbor has seen racist killings before. Just three years ago, an 11-year-old boy was struck on the sidewalk and killed during another high-speed police chase. In 1991, a 16-year-old was found dead in the river with rope marks on his neck. Both youths were Black.

Massive rebellions rocked this town in 1966, when Benton Harbor cops made racist slurs while breaking up a group of Black youth gathered at a roller-skating rink.

Jesse Brown, who works as a powder technician in an auto shop, told these reporters, "We don't have any places to go, to do, so in the summertime the youth get on their motorcycles. The cops harass young people because they're riding down the street, or standing around. If they have a beer in their hand, they must be a 'troublemaker.' Eighty percent of this town has been arrested for something. That makes it hard for them to get a job." Anthony Harvell, 25, who grew up in Benton Harbor, stated, "We're fed up with the police. They're all crooked. They bully us. They think they can run this town."

On the evening after Shurn's killing, hundreds of protesters gathered at the site of the killing, residents said, and tried to burn down the unoccupied crash site after the police told them they had to leave the memorial they had built. When cops stopped them, they turned to a vacant residence across the street, which neighbors called a former drug house. No arrests were made, according to various news reports, because the cops "were outnumbered." Police cars were pelted with bricks and bottles.

The day after the deadly high-speed chase, 70 people packed into a meeting of Benton Township officials to question them about the death of Terrance Shurn. City officials cut off discussion after 25 minutes under the pretext of a speaker using profanity when arguing that Benton Township cop Wesley Koza, who had pursued Shurn, should be suspended. He was put on paid sick leave instead. Township police chief James Coburn said that they would re-evaluate their policy on high-speed chases.

"Two years ago a boy was killed by a cop in a chase," a Benton Harbor woman told the *Militant*, asking that her name not be used. "They made a statement that it wouldn't happen again. And here it's happened again. My house is right here and I saw the whole thing," she said. "Most cops stopped and one kept going after him. The cop car hit the motorcycle wheel, and he crashed. They took his body out and laid it on the street. There was blood all over the cop." While State police said they didn't know why Shurn had fled the police cruisers, they claim that his driver's license had been suspended and that they found a small amount of marijuana on him. "Some people say Terrance wouldn't stop because he feared for his life," said Nanette Partee, who explained that many are fed up with the Benton Township cops.

Governor declares state of emergency

As protests continued on June 17, Benton Harbor and Berrien County authorities declared a state of emergency for the area, with Michigan governor Jennifer Granholm signing off the declaration later that day. Hundreds of cops were rushed to the scene from cities and towns across southwest Michigan. The Berrien County Sheriff Department ordered its "Peacekeeper," an armored vehicle, into the neighborhood that night.

The local police department reinforcements were accompanied June 18 by about 200 Michigan State Police, outfitted in riot gear, gas masks and helmets. The Michigan Army National Guard sent in three guardsmen with an armored personnel carrier that can hold up to 10 people.

More than 300 cops from Benton Harbor, neighboring communities, and the Michigan State Police filled the streets late June 18 near the site of the earlier rebellions. They patrolled in caravans of 20 vehicles, three cops per vehicle, going through city streets, block by block, looking for youth breaking the 10:00 p.m. curfew for those under 17 years old. Overhead, a police helicopter lit up the streets.

Governor Granholm said she didn't "want to overreact and cause an unintended consequence, which is community backlash even greater than the one we've seen."

The armed occupation of the town continued through the time this article was written June 23. The state police helicopter continues to circle the area at night. Every two hours or so the state police on the ground pile into patrol cars, three per vehicle, and switch locations with other troopers. They drive in single file, with the flashers lit.

Protests have also continued. On June 19, a group of 100 people gathered at the Bobo Brazil Community Center to protest segregation, police brutality, conditions at the schools, and lack of summer activities for youth. Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH led a march June 19 down the street where the killing took place.

Shurn's funeral took place June 23 at the Greater Faith Apostolic Church in Benton Harbor. At least 700 people attended, with standing room only. A large number of youth participated, many wearing T-shirts silk-screened with a photograph of Terrance Shurn.

Osborne Hart, a meat packer in Detroit, and Chessie Molano, a garment worker in Chicago, contributed to this article.

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Róger Calero Wins Deportation Fight: a Victory for All Working People. Speaker: Róger Calero, *Militant* staff writer and associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial,* who recently won six-month fight against the government's effort to deport him. Sat., June 28. Dinner 6:00 p.m., program 7:00 p.m. *Pathfinder Bookstore, 4229 S. Central Ave. Dinner $5, Program $5. (323)-233-9372.*

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CALENDAR

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Attack on the Moncada Barracks. An Evening in Solidarity with Cuba. Saturday, July 26, 6 p.m *Martin Luther King Labor Center, 1199 Health and Hospital Workers Union, 43rd Street between 8th and 9th Ave.*

Miners oppose gov't moves to raise levels of coal dust in mines

BY JASON ALESSIO

GRAND JUNCTION, Colorado—On May 22, miners and others met here to protest the Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA) new proposal that would allow mine bosses to operate mines with a higher level of coal dust in the air. The hearing lasted eight hours with 20 people testifying against the new government proposal.

Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) came from all across the West to attend. Present were UMWA miners from Kemmerer, Wyoming; Price, Utah; Rangely, Colorado; and Window Rock, Arizona; and Farmington and Black Mesa, New Mexico. Also attending were a number of representatives of the coal companies in the area.

The same day, in Birmingham, Alabama, over 80 miners gathered to protest the new MSHA proposal. At midday around 70 people went across the street to the United Auto Workers headquarters to rally against it.

Chipping away at 1969 Mine Act

Mine operators are required to mine coal with no more than 2 milligrams (mg) of coal dust per cubic meter of air. This is the standard that was fought for and won through the wave of strikes and social struggles in the coal fields following the 1968 Farmington, West Virginia, mine disaster. Out of these struggles, Congress was forced to enact the 1969 Mine Act. For the first time the government and mine operators were forced to recognize black lung as a job-related disease, enact laws to control dust levels, and establish black lung benefits.

Fine coal dust mixed with quartz, when breathed in over a period of time causes pneumoconiosis, or black lung. About 1,500 miners die each year from black lung, which can be limited by reducing dust levels in the mines with better air ventilation, use of water sprays, and scrubbers.

The 2003 MSHA proposal would increase the maximum dust level mandated by the 1969 Mine Act by four times, from 2 to 8 mg of coal dust per cubic meter of air. This would allow the mine operators to speed up their production rate at the expense of the miners' health.

Another part of the proposal will allow companies that are not in compliance with legal dust levels to continue to mine coal while they submit and resubmit ventilation plans to MSHA. Meanwhile, MSHA says miners can wear respirators or "air flow" helmets in mines where the bosses refuse to maintain acceptable air quality. This is a further assault on the gains of the 1969 Mine Act, which states, "use of respirators shall not be substituted for environmental control measures in the active workings."

A number of miners at the hearing had the opinion that "air flow" helmets are not safe to wear in a production setting. Many said that they are noisy, limit your vision, and get dirty or fog up.

Lawrence Oliver, UMWA Local 1332 president, said in an interview with the *Militant*, "Right now, with dust levels at 2 mg per cubic meter of air, thousands of miners are dying of black lung every year. Who is going to be held responsible when a thousand more will die with four times as much dust?"

Who will be held responsible?

Representatives of the National Mining Association (NMA), an organization of the coal bosses, gave a 45-minute statement at the hearing, addressing a number of things the bosses oppose in the new proposal.

Currently operators are required to submit to MSHA bimonthly compliance dust samples. Citations are issued for not submitting samples or for samples that exceed acceptable dust levels. The new proposal would require operators to collect Plan Verification samples for approval, which means operators would be responsible for verifying that their air ventilation plan meets all standards, and then MSHA would be responsible for compliance sampling.

The spokesman for the NMA said that until "credibility" is established, MSHA should have complete control over dust sampling, rejecting the proposal for operators to take any responsibility for dust sampling or the dust levels in their mines.

This is in the context of an increase in mine fires and explosions around the country directly related to methane gas and high dust levels. Consol Energy has already had three fires this year in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Virginia. Also, in September 2001, a methane explosion and fire at Jim Walters No. 5 mine killed 13 miners.

Following the Jim Walters No. 5 disaster, MSHA investigators found that nearly all coal dust accumulation samples in the area failed. Currently there are a number of lawsuits against Jim Walters filed by miners and their families. The National Mining Association is pressing to shift the liability of mine disasters and black lung compensation related to dust levels from the operator to the government.

Joe Main, UMWA international health and safety administrator, stated in a letter to MSHA, "Instead of increasing the number of shifts in which compliance sampling will take place, the new proposal substantially reduces compliance sampling by as much as 90 percent at some mines." Currently around 34 shifts a year are sampled for dust levels, which would drop to as low as 3 shifts a year.

Oliver said that the new proposal leaves a lot of room for interpretation, which will cause continuous disputes between MSHA and employers over each mine's Verified Ventilation Plan and whether or not the operators had "exhaust[ed] engineering controls" to reduce dust levels.

"It will take a long time for MSHA to get any results," he said, "and, in the meantime, miners will be forced to work in unhealthy conditions. At the same time MSHA will not be able to regulate the mines with less funding and less inspectors."

Militant/Tony Lane

Nearly 1,000 miners and supporters rally May 8 at Charleston, West Virginia, capitol building to protest government move to weaken limits on coal dust levels in mines.

Oliver was referring to the Bush administration proposal for a $7 million cut in safety enforcement in the mines and the elimination of 65 MSHA inspectors late last year.

At the hearing, one of the main things the NMA campaigned around was that new Personal Dust Monitors (PDMs) will transform dust sampling forever, ending fraud and giving accurate dust level readings. This new technology would be part of the miners' caplight and battery and would provide continuous dust level readings for the individual miner. Supporters of this say it would be an advance, getting more accurate readings of dust levels than the current method of taking shift samples bimonthly.

The current rules and the new MSHA proposal, however, do not empower miners to halt production when dust levels exceed dangerous levels. A likely scenario discussed at the hearing would be rotating miners who wear PDMs in and out of high dust level areas, not fixing the problem but spreading exposure to a higher number of miners. Another scenario discussed between a few miners was that workers who confront their boss about unacceptable dust levels would be told to wear air flow helmets.

The only rational solution to safeguard the workers' wellbeing is increasing air ventilation and improving water sprays and other engineering controls to keep conditions in the mines below the maximum acceptable dust levels.

The government "is enforcing no smoking in restaurants, bars, and everywhere, but look what they allow these coal companies to get away with," said Oliver. "It's crazy. It is like they have forgotten that they are responsible for the thousands of miners that have died of black lung. So is MSHA saying that this is OK?"

Jason Alessio is a member of UMWA Local 1984. Clay Dennison, a member of UMWA Local 2133 in Birmingham, Alabama, contributed to this article.

Unionists rally to organize Perdue

BY SAM MANUEL

GEORGETOWN, Delaware—Some 75 supporters of workers who are fighting to organize a union at the Perdue poultry processing plant rallied here outside the factory June 16. Nearly a dozen workers from the plant joined them.

The action was the latest step in these workers' effort to win representation by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW). According to officials, 400 of the 1,000 workers in the plant have signed union cards. Most workers are immigrants from Guatemala, elsewhere in Central America, and Mexico.

The "Rally for Respect," at which several local ministers spoke, was preceded by a march from the Grace United Methodist Church. "This company has grown from the labor of the workers," said Father Gumercindo Lopez, who once worked in the plant.

Cathy Mason chaired the rally on behalf of the UFCW. Workers had filed complaints with the union on a number of issues, she said. Many dealt with the continued increase in line speed, which has resulted in many repetitive motion injuries. "Workers have been subjected to verbal abuse and sexual harassment," she said. They have also complained about the bosses' refusal to organize replacements for those who need to go to the restroom.

"The company keeps us divided," said Leon Edwards, a Black worker who loads trucks. "The Spanish people work hard. They see this as their chance. But they are learning how this company treats people."

Celia Gomez, who has worked in the plant for a year, arrived for work as the rally was ending and learned about the organizing drive. "The union is needed," she said. "You don't have any rights in this place. When you come to work, you don't know when you will get off or what job you will do."

From start to finish, the timing and location of the event were a tug-of-war with the plant bosses. The rally had barely begun when management and plant security came out and told the union supporters they could not rally on the sidewalk adjacent to the plant but would have to gather in the street. The organizers of the event complied after the police were called in to enforce the company demand.

The rally was scheduled to take place between the morning and afternoon shifts in order to reach the largest number of workers. As the shift change drew closer management representatives demanded to know how long it would last. Plant security guards told several workers in the parking lot that the action had nothing to do with them and they should go in to work. The rally ended before the shift change after management agreed to accept a letter demanding a response from the company to the workers' complaints.

In May 2002 the workers in the plant won an important legal victory requiring the company to pay some $10 million in additional wages retroactively for the time it takes to put on and remove work clothing and protective gear each day. The settlement was divided among 25,000 former and current Perdue workers.

Strike at Midwest dairy defends union power

BY JACOB PERASSO

OMAHA, Nebraska—"Our brothers and sisters at Local 41 in Kansas City, Missouri; Local 238 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Local 387 in Des Moines, Iowa, stood with us to help us win," said Kim Quick, Teamsters Local 554 president. "Local 41 began a solidarity strike after picket lines were extended to the Kansas City plant. Local 238 in Iowa City put the dairy there on 24-hour notice that they would join the strike."

Two hundred workers, organized by Teamsters Local 554, struck Roberts Dairy here June 5. Pickets then spread to Roberts facilities in Lincoln, West Point, Grand Island and Norfolk, Nebraska; Salina, Kansas; and Kansas City, Missouri. The dairy workers' contract expired February 14, and an extension expired June 2.

After two days, a tentative agreement was reached that will boost wages, pensions, and establish common contract expiration dates at all Roberts Dairy plants. The agreement will last four and a half years, putting the Teamsters Dairy Division in a position to negotiate a master contract in 2007, covering all four plants in Omaha, Nebraska; Des Moines and Iowa City, Iowa; and Kansas City, Missouri.

The tentative agreement also protects workers who had recently been hired and were not yet members of the union at the time of the strike from being punished for participating in the walkout.

The company said the union asked for a four-year contract and Roberts offered a six-year contract. "A four-year agreement would result in a common expiration date of the contracts at all Roberts Dairy locations, and leave the company vulnerable to a company-wide disruption of business in the future," read a company statement.

Union officials said the company started negotiating directly with individual workers, threatened and intimidated employees, and immediately hired scabs and had them ride along with Teamsters members.

In one case, a Local 554 steward received a three-day suspension before the strike began for leaving a scab behind. "Our members rallied behind the steward, Kenny Busse, after the company issued him the suspension," Quick said.

Socialists part of increased labor resistance

Socialist workers in U.S. industrial unions meet, assess work in unfolding class struggle

BY LISA ROTTACH AND TOM FISKE

NEW YORK—"We function as communist workers in our unions today as they are, as they're becoming, and with an eye toward the future transformation of them into revolutionary instruments of the class struggle," said Joel Britton at a meeting at Hunter College here June 8. He was giving his opening political report to a national meeting of members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists who work in red meat slaughter and processing plants across the United States. Participants in the gathering work in plants organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) or in nonunion factories. Britton organizes the national steering committee of this industrial union fraction of the communist movement in the United States.

Britton discussed the ways workers seek to collectively confront the competition imposed upon them by the "one against all" divisions that are the bedrock of capitalism. "Communist workers continually look for ways to tap into the fighting sentiment of our co-workers," stated Britton. "We function together with other vanguard fighters, and help to lead workers getting together to discuss out what can be done and participate with workers in fighting together."

A packinghouse worker from Los Angeles described the increased line speeds, bathroom break restrictions, and indiscriminate firings that are fueling the sentiment of workers to organize themselves to revive the union at the Farmer John plant where she works. "When a longtime worker was fired, hundreds of workers gathered in the parking lot to demand his reinstatement," she said. "Later, a union meeting drew 300 who were looking for ways to rebuild the union, which had been severely weakened over the years. A significant number of workers now have joined the union."

Janice Lynn, a meat packer at the Smithfield plant in the Washington, D.C., area, reported, "We were able to be part of discussions around the need to fight together, to not fall prey to the tactics the company uses to pit U.S.-born workers against immigrants." Workers in this packinghouse recently petitioned their union officials for a meeting prior to their contract vote. "Right away we sought to become part of this effort with other workers. A meeting took place and workers initially rejected the contract offer. This caught the bosses by surprise. But workers were divided on whether to strike." The socialists in the plant joined in the sometimes heated discussions about how to advance unity in the workforce in order to better resist the company in the weeks leading up to the second contract vote. Several vanguard workers who went through this fight were among those most interested in reading and buying subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

"As resistance among workers begins to advance, a broad vanguard of workers begins to appear," stated Britton in his report. "Socialists function as part of the broader vanguard, which continually forms and reforms. It plays an indispensable role in the fight, in helping to mobilize the maximum number of workers, the maximum strength of the union, against the company.

Militant/Eric Simpson (right)

Above, Smithfield's meatpacking plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, is one of the largest hog processing plants in the world. The UFCW is conducting a nationwide campaign to win backing for the drive to unionize the plant. Right, workers at Point Blank Body Armor near Miami demonstrate outside the factory in the summer of 2002, at the beginning of the UNITE organizing drive. Socialist workers are increasingly integrated in such battles, where employer attacks are most fierce and the resulting labor resistance is strong.

"In these struggles, socialists also seek to bring forward the entire union—workers and officials. Some officials will be attracted to the resistance of the workers and will make important contributions to the struggle."

Britton pointed to the example of the role played by officials of UFCW Local 789 in South St. Paul, Minnesota, in the union organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods and in the fight to stop the deportation of Róger Calero. Bill Pearson, the now-retired president of the local, serves as a national co-chair of the Calero defense committee. In addition to hosting a January fund-raiser at the Local 789 union hall, he spoke at events in Omaha and Des Moines in March, helping to win new supporters to the case. He and other officers of the local helped to raise thousands of dollars in support of the Calero fight from unions in the Minnesota labor movement.

"Sales of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial,* and Pathfinder books to co-workers is a crucial part of the perspective of the revolutionary transformation of the unions," stated Britton. The stepped-up resistance pointed to during the meeting was reflected in the successful completion of the spring sales drive. Fraction members surpassed both their *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* goals, selling a total of 146 subscriptions to meat packers.

Participants discussed ways to further solidarity with the Tyson strikers, including continuing to work through their union structures to build support for the June 22 solidarity rally in Jefferson, Wisconsin. (see front page article)

The recent victory in the Calero antideportation fight opens up opportunities to deepen participation in the fight for immigrant rights. In the past six months, thousands, including many meat packers, actively embraced this struggle as their own. Róger Calero, who attended the meeting, said, "We will take the response of our co-workers, 'We won!,' and place this victory in the hands of all who are looking to fight back."

Lisa Rottach is a meat packer and member of UFCW Local 271 in Omaha, Nebraska; Tom Fiske is a meat packer in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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BY JAY RELLER

NEW YORK—"We found a lot of openness, even where there is not agreement, to what we have to say about the war. We have found a lot of questioning among miners about the course of the U.S. government at home and abroad," said Alice Kincaid, an underground miner in Utah, in her opening report at the national meeting of socialist coal miners in New York on June 7–8. The meeting included socialists working in mines organized by the United Mineworkers of America (UMWA) and some working in nonunion mines.

The SWP and Young Socialist members explained that the war drive abroad is an extension of employers' assaults on miners and other working people in the United States, said Kincaid. As they stepped up this socialist propaganda work, they also joined with their co-workers and fellow union fighters in discussions and actions to defend the union and fight for safety on the job.

The coal miners had attended hearings and protest demonstrations around the country to oppose government efforts to relax coal mine dust regulations and to further erode health and safety protections (see also page 5).

Socialist miners' victory in the international subscription drive, in which 17 miners bought subscriptions to the *Militant* and nine to *Perspectiva Mundial*, ranked as one of their main accomplishments since their last meeting in March, Kincaid said. Co-workers on the job bought the bulk of these subscriptions.

Sales of the Spanish-language monthly registered the growing number of immigrants from Latin America working in the mines, said Jason Alessio from Colorado. In the previous drive, he said, the socialist miners had not even taken a *Perspectiva Mundial* goal.

Many subscriptions were sold by teams that visited the coalfields in Arizona and New Mexico. Jason Alessio and Francisco Picado, who work at the UMWA-organized Deserado mine in Rangely, Colorado, joined one team. They met with two subscribers from the McKinley mine in New Mexico, near Window Rock, Arizona, who both renewed their subscriptions. One showed the socialists a scrapbook he had assembled on the strikes and struggles of the UMWA local, including copies of *Militant* articles on these fights.

One of the reasons to go on such trips, said Paul Mailhot, was to get the stories of different developments and struggles into the pages of the *Militant*. The paper needs more contributions by worker-correspondents in the industrial unions, he said.

The miners discussed the impact on workers and their communities of increased competition among the capitalist mine owners. Some large mining operations are closing with devastating consequences. In Utah, Skyline, a company owned by Arch, the number two coal producer in the United States, is closing, citing the low prices it is receiving for its coal. The mine still contains substantial reserves.

Unemployment rates in many coalfield areas range from 7 percent in Emery County, Utah, to almost 11 percent in Mingo County, West Virgina, where Marrowbone, a union mine, recently halted production.

At the same time other mines are hiring. Operators use the fact that there are surplus miners to intensify labor, drive down wages, and cut corners on safety.

The socialists also discussed the problems faced in mining communities as a result of the bosses' disregard for the environmental impact of their operations.

In Pennsylvania alone there are 1,700 abandoned mines and 45 uncontrolled mine fires, said Kincaid. Some have been burning for decades. Abandoned coal mines are the leading source of water pollution in Pennsylvania. Kincaid reported growing opposition to plans to restart uranium mining on the Navajo Nation in Arizona, using a method of mining that would deplete the fragile aquifers in that arid region and pollute runoff with radioactive materials.

"The people most affected by these problems are the miners themselves," said Betsy Farley, an anthracite miner in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Farley pointed to the wide resistance to the dumping of fly ash, the mineral and clay byproduct of burning coal in power plants.

The socialists discussed the importance of taking advantage of increasing opportunities to do work in defense of the Cuban Revolution among miners—especially on the Navajo Nation. They discussed plans for organizing a public meeting for Cuban students in Window Rock, Arizona.

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BY CINDY JAQUITH

NEW YORK—Resistance to employer attacks is growing among garment and textile workers and increasingly finding expression through the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). This means greater opportunities to participate in the resistance to the employers' offensive today, part of preparing now for the bigger battles coming which will advance the revolutionary transformation of the unions and create openings for recruitment to the communist movement.

These were conclusions drawn by communists working in the industry at a June 8 meeting that included UNITE members from the SWP and Young Socialists.

Lisa Potash, the organizer of the steering committee of the SWP's national UNITE union fraction and a sewing machine operator in Chicago, kicked off the discussion. Potash opened her remarks by pointing to the progress socialist garment and textile workers had registered in making their circulation drive goals for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*—a result of attention to political work with co-workers and fellow UNITE members. It built on the advances by socialist workers in conquering sewing skills necessary to situate themselves on the job to confidently engage in politics with co-workers in the garment industry.

She pointed to ferment among garment and textile workers in places like Chicago, south Florida, and North Carolina. This reflects a widespread desire on the part of workers in these industries to reach out for political answers to the capitalist crisis and to resist attacks by the employers through the organized labor movement.

One example is the ongoing struggle at Point Blank Body Armor in Oakland Park, Florida. The company manufactures bulletproof vests. It was the scene of a six-month strike that ended in victory in February when a judge ordered the company to rehire 175 fired union supporters. Strike leaders were both Haitian and Latino, including some young Cubans who recently left Cuba. Point Blank opened a second plant in Deerfield Beach, Florida, where it transferred the

Continued on Page 7

From Pathfinder

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Iranian students protest

Continued from front page
September. This position was echoed by the editors of the *New York Times, Financial Times*, and much of the big-business media.

Meanwhile, nearly two weeks after they began, student protests demanding democratic freedoms spread to at least seven other cities beyond Tehran, even though they have subsided to a degree, faced with repression by the government. Demonstrations took place in Tabriz, Zanjan, Shiraz, Yazd, Sabzehvar, Kermanshah, and Isfahan June 20, according to the Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA) and other press reports. The protests, which began June 10 at Tehran University against proposals by government officials to privatize schools, were initially met by attacks from progovernment goons. Failing to squash them through the use of these thugs, Tehran backed down a bit, arresting some of the vigilantes.

At the same time, the Iranian authorities stepped up arrests of students. In a letter to Mahmoud Shahroudi, head of Iran's judiciary, member of the *Majles* (parliament) Ahmad Shirzad protested the arrest of one of his children in the crackdown, ISNA reported. He stated that the arrests were being made on an illegal court order allowing the police to apprehend anyone they found suspicious.

But the students continue to press for democratic freedoms, including the release of those arrested. Their persistence deepened fissures within the Iranian ruling class.

Debate on the nuclear issue

"Iran has failed to meet its obligations under its Safeguards Agreement with respect to the reporting of nuclear material, the subsequent processing and use of that material and the declaration of facilities where the material was stored and processed," the IAEA report said. "Although the quantities of nuclear material involved have not been large, and the material would need further processing before being suitable for use as the fissile material component of a nuclear explosive device, the number of failures by Iran to report the material, facilities and activities in question in a timely manner as it is obliged to do…is a matter of concern. While these failures are in the process of being rectified by Iran, the process of verifying the correctness of the Iranian declarations is still ongoing."

As Washington has kept up this kind of pressure on Tehran, the Iranian government has maintained that its atomic program is designed to help supply the country's electricity needs, stating it has no intention of developing nuclear weapons.

Iran's representative at the IAEA, Ali Al Salehi, rejected the call for wider UN inspections, saying, "We have disassociated ourselves from this part of the statement."

Washington is now calling on the IAEA to speed up its snooping and present new findings within three months. The U.S. rulers are also pressing Tehran to make concessions, through economic sanctions and under the threat that U.S.-defined "contraband cargo" on Iranian ships or planes may be intercepted by the armed forces of the imperialist powers. John Bolton, U.S. undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, told BBC radio June 20, "The president has repeatedly said that all options are on the table, but (military action) is not only not our preference, it is far, far from our minds." When questioned further on whether Washington still left open the possibility of military action, he said, "It has to be an option."

The IAEA demand for more intrusive inspections has also been backed up by the "Group of 8," the European Union and the governments of Russia, Canada, and Australia. At the same time, Russian president Vladimir Putin warned against pressuring Moscow to abandon the $800 million contract it has with Tehran to build a nuclear power plant in the coastal Iranian city of Bushire. Moscow opposes "using the nuclear card in unfair competition on the Iranian market," he said.

Under this pressure, Tehran indicated quickly after the Vienna meeting that it is prepared to concede. "We will definitely try to cooperate more than before with the IAEA and give them the necessary assurances about Iran's activities," the head of Iran's atomic energy program, Gholamreza Aghazadeh, told a news conference in Tehran June 21. "We have never said we don't want to sign the additional protocol…. Our view about the protocol is positive." Earlier Tehran's position had been that it would sign the additional protocol under the condition that Washington dropped its economic sanctions against Iran and did not hinder other countries from transferring nuclear technology to the country for energy purposes, as stipulated by the NPT.

Washington's 'deputy sheriff'

In addition to pressing its campaign against Iran on the nuclear issue, Washington is pursuing charges that Tehran is "supporting terrorism." The U.S. rulers are getting backing on this front in their campaign by all the other imperialist powers.

During a European Union summit at the northern resort of Porto Carras in Greece, the EU heads of state approved a statement June 20 backing Washington's "war on terrorism" around the world, including support for the U.S. government's use of the "nonproliferation" club against Iran and North Korea. "Clearly, EU leaders are doing their rhetorical best to convince Washington they could play deputy to its role of sheriff in maintaining global security," an editorial in the June 21 *Financial Times* of London said.

A draft statement that was to be issued on the second day of this EU summit demanded that north Korea "visibly, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear programs and return to full compliance with international non-proliferation obligations." It also called on Iran to accept no-notice checks of its nuclear facilities. According to Reuters, the document also stated that Tehran's "future trade ties with the EU would depend on progress in that area, human rights and cooperation in Middle East peace efforts."

ISNA

Iranian students protest outside Tehran University mosque June 22, demanding release of students arrested at previous demonstrations. Sign in front says, "Khatami: do something, support the students," referring to Iran's president. Action was organized by the Islamic Student Association.

In that capacity as "deputy sheriff" to Washington, Paris ordered 1,300 French police to raid 40 houses north of the capital June 17 and arrest 150 members of the Mujahedeen Khalq of Iran (MEK), or People's Mujahedeen. This is an armed group that originated as an anti-shah guerrilla organization in the 1960s, turned against the Iranian regime after the 1979 revolution, and carried out assassinations and sabotage during the Iran-Iraq war. Former U.S. president William Clinton classified the group as "terrorist" in 1997. The current White House has stuck by the designation. Last year, the EU placed the MEK on its own list of "terrorist" groups. The MEK's center of operations was in Iraq until U.S. forces captured its bases this spring. Paris had allowed the group free reign for almost a quarter century. But not any more.

Student protests persist

Meanwhile, protests by students and others have continued in Tehran and other cities. Days after the demonstrations broke out, U.S. president Bush and other government officials voiced support for the protesters.

Most reports in the big-business press, however, have not been able to paint the unfolding protests as pro-imperialist. "This is a student movement, not an American movement," chanted some 500 students outside their dormitories in Tehran in answer to charges that they were tools of Washington, according to the Iranian Student News Agency. A number of reporters also noted that most of the protesting students were angered by Bush's meddling, and that only a small minority expressed support for U.S. intervention. "We want no shah, we want no supreme leader," was a popular chant.

In spite of the government's official disavowal of the proposal to privatize universities, the protests picked up momentum after the first week and began to spread to other cities. As goon attacks on the demonstrators failed to stop the student actions, the government came under increasing criticism and had to backtrack from earlier open support for such practices.

At the same time, Tehran stepped up the arrests of students, reportedly taking in as many as 135 in Tabriz, 50 in Yazd, and 105 in Sabzehvar. Muhammad Yazdi, former head of the country's judiciary, said at Friday prayers June 20 that the protesters should be punished. "I asked the head of the judiciary and public prosecutors across Iran not to treat these people with compassion as they endangered the country's security," he said.

At Tehran University students have organized a public committee in defense of those arrested during the recent demonstrations, reported the Iranian Students News Agency. According to ISNA, the committee has three goals: to follow up and identify students who are arrested; to meet with families of those students and attend to their needs; and to meet and consult with Majles deputies and security officials to help gain their release. Students and families of arrested students have been conducting silent pickets, sometimes with signs, in front of the Majles and some universities. After the meetings they held with parliamentary deputies, including the speaker of the house, the identities of more students arrested were made public and reported in the press.

Iranian papers also reported that Saeed Asgar, one of the ringleaders of extralegal goons, is still under arrest. After the landslide victory of President Mohammed Khatami in 1997, Asgar made an unsuccessful assassination attempt against one of the president's advisors. He was found organizing attacks against students in recent demonstrations and was arrested.

Nearly 170 members of the Majles issued a statement June 22 in relation to the student protests. "Because there has not been enough attention to the just demands of the people, and because there is no suitable vehicle to criticize the regime in an orderly fashion, any small social and economic protest tends to lead into crisis and disturbance," the statement said. "At times this whets the foreign powers' appetite to intervene in the country's internal affairs."

The statement continued: "Despite the harsh treatment of students…they proved quite capable of differentiating between conduct that is thought out and responsible, and adventurism." At the end of the statement, the Majles deputies declared their solidarity with all legal student activities and called for prosecution of all the so-called "forces in civilian clothes" who have victimized the students—a euphemism for the progovernment thugs.

ISNA reported that some student organizations have applied for a permit to demonstrate on July 9, the anniversary of massive student protests in 1999. At that time student demonstrations were met with brutal force by extralegal vigilantes and police. Pro-regime goons broke into student dormitories in Tehran, beating students indiscriminately and setting their rooms on fire. Each year since then, students have honored the memory of Ezzat Ibrahim-Nejat, a conscript soldier and protester who was murdered while visiting a friend at his dormitory, and have continued to demand that his killers be brought to justice.

Socialist industrial workers meet

Continued from Page 6
workers it hired to try to break the strike. Although the bosses intend to keep the union out, some workers in the new plant are already signing UNITE cards. Participants in the meeting described how Point Blank workers have been introduced to the Pathfinder Bookstore in Miami and to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. They are finding these to be valuable tools as they discuss questions of union strategy, the fight for Haitian rights, the Cuban Revolution, and other political questions.

Meanwhile, another fight is brewing at Hollander Home Fashions in Chicago, where the UNITE contract is due to expire June 30. The very low pay for many and the fact that the company doesn't provide family health insurance are key issues. Workers are trying to figure out how to use the union to win a better contract. Chessie Molano, a sewing machine operator at the plant, said, "Workers feel we are the union." Some have asked her to bring in copies of *Militant* articles on the 2001 strike at Hollander in California. The victory of Róger Calero against deportation proceedings has also been closely watched. "I want to know how he did it," a co-worker told Molano.

In Kannapolis, North Carolina, thousands of UNITE members at Pillowtex are discussing what to do in face of the company's announcement that it is going to sell its mills or "restructure," a code word for layoffs, speed-up, and wage cuts. After a 25-year fight, Pillowtex workers won UNITE union representation just four years ago, an important victory for textile workers and for all working people in the southeast United States. Socialists in the mill have participated in the discussion, explaining that what workers face is the worldwide capitalist crisis. "There is no 'Pillowtex solution,' no 'American solution,'" said Seth Galinsky, who works at the mill. The fight for a sliding scale of wages and hours, to raise the minimum wage, and back affirmative action are key ideas socialists put forward, along with defending concrete gains won by the union."

Barry Fatland, a sewing machine operator from the Twin Cities and former Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate, described the impact of the imperialist war against Iraq on his co-workers, some of whom are from the Mideast. He said there were no yellow ribbons or flags in his plant in support of the war but some of his co-workers were demoralized by Washington's quick takeover of Iraq. In this situation, socialist workers respond by agreeing with fellow workers that the U.S. military victory was a blow to working people. At the same time, they point to the next steps in this country and around the world to fight the system of imperialist domination. Fatland reported on the impact of these discussions on the job.

Lea Sherman, a garment worker from Washington, D.C., said that there were quite a few T-shirts with American flags and yellow ribbons in her plant. She went on to describe a UNITE organizing drive at the Linens of the Week industrial laundry, taking place only a few blocks from the Pathfinder Bookstore in that city. UNITE has also launched a nationwide organizing drive at CINTAS, the largest industrial laundry company in North America.

Willie Cotton noted the impact of plant-gate sales of the socialist press at Pillowtex. "Consistency is very important," he said. Because the socialists have sold regularly outside the plant, "sales increased when the crisis arose," said Cotton. In just one day, socialists sold 14 copies of the June 2 *Militant* with an article on the planned sale of the mills and a related editorial at the plant gate.

Cotton also noted that visits with literature to co-workers' homes have been an effective way to continue discussion. Workers from several other parts of the country reported similar experiences.

Defending Marxism, its dialectic method

The following are excerpts from the article "A petty-bourgeois opposition in the Socialist Workers Party" by Leon Trotsky. The entire article, dated Dec. 15, 1939, can be found in the book *In Defense of Marxism* by the same author, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in June. Trotsky was a leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution and of the Bolshevik party. Following the death of V.I. Lenin—the central leader of the Bolsheviks and of the October revolution—Trotsky led the international fight for the program for world revolution developed by the Communist International under Lenin's guidance, against the counterrevolution by a bureaucratic caste whose chief representative became Joseph Stalin. He was expelled from the Soviet Communist Party in the late 1920s and forced into exile by Stalin's regime.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

In this article, Trotsky defends the materialist foundations of scientific socialism, responding to those in the workers movement in the late 1930s who bent to the pressure of bourgeois public opinion during Washington's buildup towards entering the spreading imperialist war in Europe. He explains why working people must oppose assaults by the capitalist powers on the degenerated Soviet workers state, and why only a party that fights to bring growing numbers of workers into its ranks and leadership can chart a revolutionary course. Copyright © 1995 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted here by permission.

BY LEON TROTSKY

It is necessary to call things by their right names. Now that the positions of both factions in the struggle have become determined with complete clearness, it must be said that the minority of the National Committee is leading a typical petty-bourgeois tendency. Like any petty-bourgeois group inside the socialist movement, the present opposition is characterized by the following features: a disdainful attitude toward theory and an inclination toward eclecticism; disrespect for the tradition of their own organization; anxiety for personal "independence" at the expense of anxiety for objective truth; nervousness instead of consistency; readiness to jump from one position to another; lack of understanding of revolutionary centralism and hostility toward it; and finally, inclination to substitute clique ties and personal relationships for party discipline. Not all the members of the opposition of course manifest these features with identical strength. Nevertheless, as always in a variegated bloc the tinge is given by those who are most distant from Marxism and proletarian policy. A prolonged and serious struggle is obviously before us. I make no attempt to exhaust the problem in this article, but I will endeavor to outline its general features.

In the January 1939 issue of the *New International* a long article was published by Comrades [James] Burnham and [Max] Shachtman*, "Intellectuals in Retreat." The article, while containing many correct ideas and apt political characterizations, was marred by a fundamental defect if not flaw. While polemicising against opponents who consider themselves—without sufficient reason—above all as proponents of "theory," the article deliberately did not elevate the problem to a theoretical height. It was absolutely necessary to explain why the American "radical" intellectuals accept Marxism without the dialectic (a clock without a spring). The secret is simple. In no other country has there been such rejection of the class struggle as in the land of "unlimited opportunity." The denial of social contradictions as the moving force of development led to the denial of the dialectic as the logic of contradictions in the domain of theoretical thought. Just as in the sphere of politics it was thought possible everybody could be convinced of the correctness of a "just" program by means of clever syllogisms and society could be reconstructed through "rational" measures, so in the sphere of theory it was accepted as proved that Aristotelian logic, lowered to the level of "common sense," was sufficient for the solution of all questions.

Workers defend factory from invading German troops in Stalingrad, Russia, 1942. Hitler's armies were defeated in effort to overturn Soviet workers state. Proletarian majority in SWP defended Soviet Union against imperialist assault. Petty-bourgeois opposition carried out opposite course, arguing Russia was no longer a workers state.

Pragmatism, a mixture of rationalism and empiricism, became the national philosophy of the United States.... But times have changed and the philosophy of pragmatism has entered a period of bankruptcy just as has American capitalism.

The authors of the article did not show, could not and did not care to show, this internal connection between philosophy and the material development of society, and they frankly explained why.

"The two authors of the present article," they wrote of themselves, "differ thoroughly on their estimate of the general theory of dialectical materialism, one of them accepting it and the other rejecting it.... There is nothing anomalous in such a situation. Though theory is doubtless always in one way or another related to practice, the relation is not invariably direct or immediate...."

What is the meaning of this thoroughly astonishing reasoning? Inasmuch as *some* people through a bad method *sometimes* reach correct conclusions, and inasmuch as some people through a correct method *not infrequently* reach incorrect conclusions, therefore...the method is not of great importance. We shall meditate upon methods sometime when we have more leisure, but now we have other things to do. Imagine how a worker would react upon complaining to his foreman that his tools were bad and receiving the reply: With bad tools it is possible to turn out a good job, and with good tools many people only waste material. I am afraid that such a worker, particularly if he is on piecework, would respond to the foreman with an unacademic phrase. A worker is faced with refractory materials which show resistance and which because of that compel him to appreciate fine tools, whereas a petty-bourgeois intellectual—alas!—utilizes as his "tools" fugitive observations and superficial generalizations—until major events club him on the head.

*James Burnham and Max Shachtman were leaders of a petty-bourgeois opposition in the SWP. Burnham was a philosophy professor at New York University. After his split with the SWP in 1940, he became openly anticommunist, worked for the CIA, and later served as editor of *National Review*. Shachtman, a founding leader of the Communist League, a predecessor of the SWP, led a minority faction in the 1940 split and subsequently became a right-wing social democrat.

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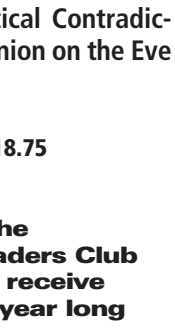

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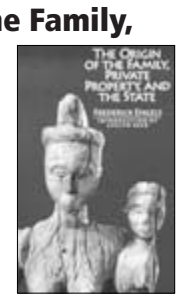

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— GREAT SOCIETY

Harry Ring

Capitalist education, 'Labour' gov't—As officials assert a cash crisis, 3,000 teachers in England are suddenly being fired. One headmaster responded by sending the pupils home after lunch. At another school it was announced that beginning in September, a half-day session will be knocked off each week.

'Looting' the looters—The UK-based Accident Group, specializing in injury insurance, created turmoil when it dispatched e-mail and written letters informing 2,500 employees they were fired. They also offered an administration phone number. Callers got a voicemail message telling them that their month's salary would not be paid. The *Times* of London reported that some enraged workers walked off with some office equipment in small compensation for the wages stolen. The paper smeared them as "looters."

Read it and rebel—"MOBILE, Alabama—Federal authorities continued their investigation of the Mobile County Metro jail where an inmate in solitary confinement died from flesh-eating bacteria. James Carpenter died in July 2000 [!] after spending most of 15 days naked and hand-cuffed. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges."—*USA Today*.

Due process—ICN Pharmaceuticals is suing its former top dog to get back the $38 million bonus it handed him last year. Why? Because shareholders are suing to get the money back.

Hand-to-mouth—Richard Scrushy, recent top dog at Healthsouth, is "worth" a reported $175 million. But the bread has been impounded, apparently while it's determined who stole what from whom. Meanwhile, Scrushy has to live and has pleaded with the court that he needs $223,000 a month living expenses. The family grocery bill alone is $2,000.

101, picking right swivel chair—"Orange County's [California] human resources department spent $3.2 million in unemployment insurance funds to pay for unrelated expenses like 'enlightened leadership' management training."—*Orange County Register*.

From piddles grow puddles—A housing development for farm workers, the first in a decade, is under way in Oxnard, north of Los Angeles County. The $5.9 million project will offer 24 units to farm workers in desperate need of housing. Conceding it as "a drop in the bucket," the *Los Angeles Times* headlined it as a "foot in the door."

Another foot in the door—In the Palm Springs area, not too far from Oxnard, a fully furnished "Palace of Dreams" is up for sale. The estate includes awesome amenities—Three king-size plasma TVs, computer controlled rooms, etc. Asking price: $13.9 million.

Everything's up to date in L.A.—The folks in City Hall are bickering over whether or not the most recent guesstimate of the number of homeless people is inflated. The counters concluded there were 84,000 homeless. That was a decade ago.

Pathfinder supporters surpass catalog campaign goal

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Pathfinder supporters went over the top in a successful six-week catalog promotional campaign that ended June 1, getting the 2003 Pathfinder catalog into the hands of 272 bookstore buyers or managers in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. The drive exceeded the overall goal of 250 adopted by local areas participating in this effort. Through this work many new contacts with book buyers were made that will be invaluable for ongoing sales work.

Building on the success of this campaign, supporters have launched a one-month follow-up effort to revisit some of the bookstores and libraries where they received the best response to encourage buyers to place their online order for Pathfinder books. This campaign runs until July 10. The 60-page catalogue provides brief summaries and cover reproductions of the hundreds of titles published and distributed by Pathfinder in English, Spanish, French, as well as Swedish, Farsi, Greek, and Russian. It's available to be purchased for $1.00 at www.pathfinderpress.com.

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Several new attractive flyers highlighting some of Pathfinder's recently released and most popular titles are now available to be downloaded from the "News from Pathfinder" section of pathfinderpress.com. One of the leaflets, entitled "The Cuban Revolution in world politics," features four of Pathfinder's recently published titles on Cuba: *October 1962: The "Missile" Crisis As Seen from Cuba; Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War, 1956–58; From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution;* and *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas.*

Another flyer, titled "Favorites from Pathfinder," features *Capitalism's World Disorder* by Jack Barnes; *Malcolm X Talks to Young People; Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Barnes; *New International* no. 11, with the feature article "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War"; *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; and *Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters.

These flyers were used by Pathfinder sales representatives at the BookExpo America convention held in Los Angeles in May, and will be distributed at the American Library Association conference taking place June 21–24 in Toronto.

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In the beginning of June, Pathfinder supporters in Greece, taking advantage of new opportunities to travel through both the Greek and Turkish sectors of the island nation of Cyprus, organized a one-week visit to bookstores in that country to take orders for Pathfinder titles and the nine Pathfinder books and pamphlets translated into Greek and published by Diethnes Vima. A total of 33 Diethnes Vima books were sold to five shops, with orders for 16 more from two other bookstores. In addition, 11 Pathfinder books were sold to one English-language bookshop in the Turkish-speaking north of the island. Over the course of the week, supporters visited 15 bookshops in four cities in Cyprus. Among the Diethnes Vima titles placed in these stores were: *Problems of Women's Liberation* by Evelyn Reed, *U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War, The Second Declaration of Havana, Yugoslavia: the Roots of the Conflict,* and *Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War*.

"As soon as we brought our stock of 11 books and placed them on the desk" at one shop that stocked English-language titles, wrote team members Maria Plessa and Natasha Terlexis, the buyer said, "these are very salable, all of these will sell. I'll take them all." The titles she purchased included *Malcolm X Talks to Young People, Capitalism's World Disorder* by Barnes, *New International* no. 7, *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East,* and *Art and Revolution* by Leon Trotsky.

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Meanwhile, in Athens, Greece, a sales promotion campaign for the recently published Greek edition of *Problems of Women's Liberation* has netted sales of 45 copies of the book at 10 bookstores that supporters recently visited. In response to a press release sent out by Diethnes Vima about the book, the May 9 issue of *Bibliothiki,* the literary supplement of the largest circulation newspaper *Eleftheroltypia*, ran a review of the book along with a photo of its cover. "In her articles Evelyn Reed analyzes the economic and social roots of the oppression of women over the ages. She explains why the oppression of women is the result of property relations (and not gender relations) and presents a clear perspective for women's emancipation," the review stated. After the article appeared two bookstores that had not previously placed orders requested copies of the book. Supporters in Greece are also planning to staff a booth at the three-day annual Anti-Racist festival July 4–6, which attracts thousands of youth and immigrants every year.

Georges Mehrabian, Natasha Terlexis, and Maria Plessa from Athens, Greece, contributed to this column.

PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO

June 30, 1978

NEW YORK—When the thousands of people gathered on June 19, 1953, for a final vigil for Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the police crowded them into a sidestreet off Union Square.

But on June 19, 1978, when 3,000 or more came to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Rosenberg execution, they had union Square. In fact, the police blocked off an extra lane of traffic to make room when the crowd swelled.

Catarino Garza, who was at the 1953 vigil, told me, "It was a sad and grim crowd then; there wasn't much talking."

By contrast, the 1978 tribute was full of people talking, getting petitions signed, leafleting, selling newspapers and pamphlets and buttons.

As Michael Meeropol, one of the Rosenbergs' sons, said, "Our presence here says loud and clear: they may have killed two people twenty-five years ago, but they didn't crush the movement." He chaired the rally along with his brother, Robert Meeropol; Morton Sobell, a codefendant with the Rosenbergs who spent nineteen years in prison; and Helen Sobell.

Just as it was getting dark the crowd observed a period of silence to remember the Rosenbergs, who had been killed in Sing Sing just before sunset twenty-five years ago.

June 29, 1953

A smell of the auto-da-fé—the burning of heretics—hangs over the land. With the legal murder on June 19 of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the modern Inquisition has sent its first two victims to the stake.

Their inquisitors kept the Rosenbergs on the wrack for weeks and months, offering the condemned couple their lives in return for "recantations" and "confessions." The Rosenbergs declared their innocence to the end. They refused to "abjure" themselves and spurned the role of stoolpigeons and perjurers as demanded by the Eisenhower administration, with its Department of Justice and FBI.

Enraged that their odious compact was refused, the witch hunters in obscene haste shoved aside a last-minute stay of execution granted by Justice Douglas and claimed their blood victims.

The Eisenhower administration feared to wait any longer the test of public opinion. It feared that each day would see the protest and indignation grow, not only abroad but at home. The juridical case against the Rosenbergs was coming apart at the seams. It was becoming known that the Rosenbergs were actually charged not with committing espionage but with mere "conspiracy"—agreement to commit—such acts. No tangible evidence was put forward even for this nebulous charge except the claims of a single informer who feared his own neck was at stake if he did not testify as demanded by the FBI. They rushed to kill the Rosenbergs precisely because the case could not stand up under further close public examination.

This was a deed of class hate and class vengeance. The brutal American capitalist class has sadistically vented on the helpless bodies of the Rosenbergs its rage and frustration at the setbacks it has received abroad from the forces of the colonial and socialist revolutions and for the impediments raised by the revolutionary masses on all the continents to its schemes of world conquest.

Militant/Laura Gray

Cartoon published in the *Militant* dated June 29, 1953, ten days after the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (see column at right).

EDITORIALS

Support student protests in Iran

Washington has tightened the noose around Tehran by using the report by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The agency rebuked Iran for some violations of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and demanded more intrusive inspections of its nuclear facilities. It set another meeting in September to assess whether the Iranian government met these requirements. The U.S. rulers, now with firmer support from their imperialist allies, thus took another step along their course toward toppling the regime in Iran—their goal since the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah, one of the main pillars of imperialist domination in the region.

Working people around the world should denounce these steps by the U.S. and other imperialist powers and demand "Hands off Iran!"

At the same time, the student protests in Tehran and other Iranian cities that began in early June deserve wholehearted support. These actions are pushing toward greater democratic freedoms. They can result in greater space for political expression and organization of working people in Iran. While there is no indication that this democratic movement is going or will go in a proletarian direction—that is, toward the working class and its allies and a class-conscious vanguard assuming the leadership—it is progressive. The regime in Tehran has had a hard time clamping down on the protests through the use of goons; for that to happen, they would need a quick victory in putting down the demonstrations. But that's not what transpired. The government had to come out denouncing, to a degree, the goon attacks and even arrest some of the ringleaders, but couldn't quickly find an adequate substitute. It remains stuck with them.

This position is a correction of the line presented in last week's *Militant*. The subhead of the lead article in the last issue said, "Washington tries to use student protests in drive to oust regime." It gave the wrong impression the *Militant* somehow backed the arguments of the regime in Tehran that the protests are "objectively" counterrevolutionary, largely instigated by the CIA.

It's true the U.S. government is trying to take advantage of these protests to pursue its goals in the region. That's to be expected from any imperialist power trying to subvert a semicolonial regime that's a thorn in its side and faces internal unrest. But there is no need to put a negative everywhere the imperialists put a positive sign.

Any progress toward opening more political space in Iran will undercut the hand of imperialism in its designs to attack the country. That's the *Militant's* central and always its first point. The three main arguments Washington has used in its campaign pushing for "regime change" in Iran have been: 1) nuclear weapons development, 2) support for "terrorist" groups, and 3) denial of basic human freedoms. On the nuclear issue, Washington is making steady progress. But there are indications that Tehran may back down and make more concessions on its sovereignty and even its right to systematically develop nuclear power. On the "aiding terrorism" charges, Tehran has been showing a degree of collaboration with Washington, but only enough to whet the appetite of U.S. imperialism and make the situation worse for Iran. One of the imperialists' stronger cards is the denial of basic democratic rights in Iran. So a movement that can push back existing restrictions on basic rights and push for more space undercuts the hand of U.S. imperialism and its allies. The U.S. rulers can't use the same arguments against Tehran they used against Baghdad, that the hated Baathist regime killed thousands of its own people now uncovered in mass graves. But Washington does use the fact that there are many restrictions on freedom of expression, freedom to meet and organize, and it especially takes advantage of the prejudicial treatment of women in Iran.

Most reports in the bourgeois press, however, have not been able to paint these demonstrations as pro-imperialist. Very few people are quoted by the media saying "We want the Americans to come here to free us like they did in Iraq." Other chants like "We want neither shah nor supreme leader" seem to be more prominent.

For some time the biggest danger to the remaining gains and dynamics of the anti-shah revolution has been the regime in Iran. Class-conscious workers are for the Iranian toilers and their allies changing that regime. So any protests like those by the students that tend to further weaken the regime and its restrictions in a way that doesn't weaken sovereignty but gives space to the toilers are positive, progressive, and should be backed—when they are inside Iran. Demonstrations organized in the United States or other imperialist countries to support the student protests in Iran will tend to have a pro-imperialist character, unless they are clearly aimed at the imperialists and their main thrust is "Hands off Iran!"

There is no threat of the reinstitution of shah's Peacock Throne. There is no imminent invasion or bombing of Iran being prepared by Washington either. If there was a military attack on the horizon, class-conscious workers everywhere would act accordingly, placing as number one task defense of the Iran's sovereignty. U.S. imperialism is pursuing its campaign against Iran through economic sanctions, by pushing on the nuclear issue, raising the specter of interdicting ships and planes that they say carry "contraband cargo"—and surely they are also carrying out CIA actions. The *Militant* has and will continue to write about all these measures every week. It will continue to call on working people in all the imperialist countries to demand "Hands off Iran!" including hands off the Iranian regime. Anything the imperialists are doing to promote toppling the Iranian government must be opposed. But that's not what's happening at the moment.

Some of the *Militant*'s past coverage may have also conveyed the impression that the current Iranian regime, in a warped form, is a defender of the remaining gains of the revolution. But that's not true. The reality is that there remains little momentum from the 1979 revolution today. It's been more than 20 years since the early 1980s when the Iranian toilers poured to the battlefront to defend their country from the U.S.-inspired invasion by Baghdad aimed at destroying the gains of the anti-shah revolt.

The great revolution against the monarchy did strengthen the Iranian nation vis-à-vis imperialism. It was truly one of the magnificent popular revolutions of the last quarter of the 20th century. But after 24 years the gains in the relationship of forces have been eroded.

Last week's *Militant* also gave the impression that the arrests in Paris by the French police of members of the People's Mujahedeen contradicted U.S. interests. The opposite is the case. Washington is leading an international coalition of imperialist powers and their allies under the banner of "smashing terrorism" to defend the imperialist system and extend its domination. They are doing it by concentrating on their most vulnerable foes—armed opposition groups able to maintain themselves as an alternative because of the declining political prospects of the national bourgeoisies in the semicolonial world. The U.S. and other imperialist powers have wide support for going after all these groups that often carry out suicide bombing attacks and other similar such actions. There are no disagreements among the imperialist powers, or within bourgeois public opinion, on the policy of targeting "terrorists." Washington has kicked its French competitors around enough with the war on Iraq and is successfully pushing Paris to get back in line as a deputy sheriff helping to maintain the world imperialist order. This is what the arrests of the Mujahedeen by the French police are all about. They have a little, but not much, to do with Paris trying to appease Tehran.

In 1999, following student demonstrations at the time at Tehran University, working people came out in solidarity, and then workers raised demands to have unions and legalize strikes. Of course, the Iranian bourgeois politicians remember what workers were able to do from mid-1978 through 1979, when the toilers were in the frontline trenches of the anti-shah rebellion.

The working class so far has not come out visibly to back the current student actions. But these demonstrations and their democratic demands are important to hold and expand the political space working people, women, and oppressed nationalities have been able to maintain. This creates the best conditions to keep the imperialists out. The autocratic clampdown on toilers that the regime has been pursuing—based on the authority of scriptures—is reactionary and tends to immobilize the masses against any imperialist offensive. For this reason also the *Militant* is clearly on the side of the students and explains the significance of their actions for Iran's toilers and in the fight against imperialism.

Fight like Calero, fight to win!

Róger Calero, who beat back Washington's effort to deport him, has launched a speaking tour to turn his victory into a springboard for other struggles for justice. Across the country and internationally, he is going back to those who supported his defense campaign and to seek out other fellow working-class fighters. His defenders are organizing a "Fight Like Calero—Fight to Win" tour to explain the lessons of how the campaign was won and to join with others standing up to attacks by the bosses, the cops, and the government.

Calero's tour is about linking up with other immigrant workers resisting similar deportation threats, spreading the lessons of his fight and its trajectory in continuity with other defense efforts waged by the vanguard of the working-class movement over decades, and, in doing so, maximizing the chance that the percentage of fights against Washington that end in similar victories is raised. The stakes are significant, since the assault by the employers and their government against immigrant workers is at the spearpoint of the antilabor offensive by the ruling class.

Calero and his defenders didn't simply put up a fight. They fought to win. They knew the U.S. legal arena, especially the immigration system, is rigged against working people. So they launched a campaign that was public, vocal, broad, and nonpartisan, drawing on the best traditions of the working-class movement.

Defenders of Calero, a *Militant* staff writer and an editor of the Spanish-language socialist magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, told the facts of the case, raised funds for legal and publicity expenses, and put pressure on the government to drop the case. They told how he was arrested by immigration cops on his way back from reporting assignments in Cuba and Mexico, and how U.S. authorities were trying to deport him based on a minor offense on his record that the immigration agency itself had waived a decade ago when it issued him a green card. They pointed out that Calero faced what tens of thousands of other immigrant workers are subjected to. And they presented this as an attack not just on him but on all immigrants, on the rights of journalists, on the rights of all working people.

The campaign tapped into the ongoing labor resistance. United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, of which Calero was a member when he lived in Minnesota, adopted the antideportation effort as its own and helped raise substantial funds for the campaign in the broader labor movement. Other unions and many immigrant rights organizations pitched in as well.

There were no guarantees that Calero's fight would succeed, or how long it would last, but the odds were maximized by this stance. As the protest messages poured into the immigration offices and the case received media coverage, it became a hot potato for the government—it was the wrong fight at the wrong time for them.

Defenders of Calero are now using the outcome of this fight as a tool for other defense efforts. Some, like Omar Arango in Newark, New Jersey, have drawn on the approach taken by Calero's defense campaign and won a victory of their own against the immigration cops. Another fight that has been intertwined with Calero's is the campaign for justice for Serafín Olvera, which recently won the conviction of three cops involved in the brutalization that resulted in his death. Over the past few months, wherever he traveled, speaking about his case, Calero pledged to spread the word about other struggles for justice. These include the campaign against the frame-up of Farouk Abdel-Muhti, the effort to free the Puerto Rican political prisoners, the fight by garment workers at Point Blank in Miami to win recognition of their union, and the struggle to free the Cuban Five.

Meeting those commitments, Calero and his defenders are joining with other militant workers to spread the message about their common struggles and saying: "Let's fight together to win!"

Getting the facts right

As an aid to our worker-correspondents, the *Militant* is publishing below its guidelines for providing source material for articles sent to the paper. These were first published in 1996.

The masthead of the *Militant* reads, "A socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people." The *Militant* makes a promise to working people—we tell the truth. We stand behind what we write and have the facts to prove it. This is the paper's political responsibility. We encourage readers to send the *Militant* articles about political developments and struggles by working people and the oppressed all over the world. The *Militant* couldn't exist without its worker-correspondents. To help make sure these articles meet our high standards of accuracy, we are taking this opportunity to reaffirm and publish our sourcing policy.

The *Militant* editorial staff needs to verify every single fact in each article that appears in the paper. Sourcing starts with interviews, as well as facts from other newspapers, magazines, television, radio, books, websites, or Internet publications. No article will be considered for publication without source materials arriving along with the story.

It's important to get the names of those quoted in the *Militant*. This paper's policy is not to use anonymous quotes, or just individuals' first names. The only exception to this rule can be when it's clearly stated that the person interviewed requested that their name not be used, or that a pseudonym be used, for fear of persecution by an employer or a state repressive institution. When a correspondent asks, "May I quote you for an article in the *Militant*?" They should ask for the full name. It's often useful to find out the person's union affiliation and age as well. Verify that you've written down the correct spelling of the person's name while you're at it. Many people like to see their name in the paper, but only if it's accurately spelled and identified.

When the source is an interview it should be noted in the article submitted. Be prepared to fax or e-mail your notes to the *Militant* if there's any question that needs to be verified. Leaflets for the spelling of names and clippings from newspapers for quotations are other examples of source materials. If you use portions of an article previously published in the *Militant*, be sure to cite that as a source, and include the clipping, even if it's available on the *Militant*'s website.

One common mistake is the misspelling of names and places. Be sure to double-check with the person or check a map or dictionary. Other common mistakes are numbers, dates, accents on names, and the exact names of political parties, unions, and other organizations. A source is needed for all of the above mentioned; it's easy to misremember such details.

Judge the sources you are using from a political standpoint. Not every "fact" that appears in a bourgeois newspaper is true. Working-class correspondents need to judge: Who is saying this, why do they say it, and is this accurate? Supposedly neutral descriptions, terms, or wording used by the capitalist press often slip in their own class bias. It's better to report it in your own words.

Each source submitted with an article to the *Militant* should be labeled with letters, from A to Z. Use numbers to indicate the source in each particular lettered source. For example, verify a fact (1) from an article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (letter A). The source for that fact would be A1. In a bracket next to the sentence where that fact appears type *<A1>*, and so on, until you've indicated sources for every fact. If the source is an interview you conducted mark the section with *<reporter's notes>*. Marking these source references for each paragraph of your article will make it possible for the *Militant* editors and copy editors to do an accurate job in preparing the article for publication.

Working people want to be armed with the facts. By sticking to these guidelines, all *Militant* correspondents can help make their paper an effective, powerful weapon in discussing world politics and acting in the struggles of the international working class.

Three years of communist work in Carolinas

BY SETH GALINSKY

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina—A meeting held here June 14 celebrated the work accomplished in the last three years by socialist workers and young socialists in the Kannapolis area. The event officially closed the Pathfinder Bookstore and offices of the Socialist Workers Party, and sent off SWP and Young Socialists members to Chicago, Miami, San Francisco, and Seattle, where they will continue the work of building the communist movement.

The SWP decided to establish the organizing committee here in 2000. The move came a few months after the workers at the giant Fieldcrest Cannon textile mill brought their fight to unionize the plant—first launched 25 years earlier—to a victorious conclusion. The successful organizing drive in the anti-union "right-to-work" state helped to throw a spotlight on the character of the area as an industrial center, and the potential weight in politics of its working class.

In the wake of a deepening crisis, the mill's current owner, Pillowtex, is now pushing workers to sign on to a new round of takebacks and simultaneously threatening to sell the plant or enter bankruptcy protection.

In the past three years organizing committee members have been part of a number of social protests and have built solidarity with some important union struggles. These experiences were a key theme of the event. Participants included members and supporters of the communist movement from Atlanta; Birmingham, Alabama; Greensboro, North Carolina; and Washington, D.C., along with workers from the Pillowtex plant and a local auto parts factory.

They were welcomed by Connie Allen, who chaired the meeting. Allen was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in North Carolina in 2002 and has been an active member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) at Pillowtex for several years.

The speakers panel included Dennis Richter, a member of the organizing committee and of the SWP's National Committee; Sam Manuel, the *Militant*'s Washington bureau chief; and Michael Ellis of the Young Socialists.

Manuel spoke on key trends in the class struggle, including the increasing impact of the economic depression, the intensifying conflicts among Washington and other imperialist powers, the accelerated campaign by liberal and left forces to win working people to "lesser evil" solutions in preparation for the 2004 elections, and the current uptick in labor resistance around the country.

The socialists had just participated in the international drive to win 1,000 new and repeat subscribers to the *Militant* and 250 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, said Michael Ellis. Campaigners had set up regular tables on campuses, and had sold door-to-door in working-class areas and at factory gates. The result was a successful conclusion to the local drive as well as the international effort, he said.

'See ourselves as part of the world'

To carry out communist politics in the Carolinas, as anywhere, said Richter, "you have to start with the world political situation. Working people have to see ourselves as part of the world, and part of a global fight against the conditions that the natural workings of imperialism impose on us."

This international approach, which has been blood-and-bone of the communist movement since its foundation, has been made a little more natural by the increasingly multinational character of the working-class in the region, he said—in part because of the impact of immigration. Like Allen, Richter has been working at Pillowtex. "Our co-workers there are Black, white, Latino, Bosnian, Laotian, Hmong, African, and more," he said.

Richter pointed to a display showing some of the struggles that communists had joined over the last several years from their base in the workers district in Kannapolis and as UNITE members.

Members of Local 1501 at Pillowtex's Plant 1 built solidarity with their fellow union members at Hollander Home Fashions in Los Angeles during a strike in 2001, he said. They had joined a squad of the workers from California in a picket line outside the company' s factory in Tignall, Georgia. The workers at the Georgia plant refused to cross the line.

UNITE members and other workers also joined solidarity actions with the Charleston Five. They were members of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), who were framed up after police attacked a picket line in Charleston in January 2000 that was organized to protest the use of non-union labor at the dock. The ILA defense effort drew wide support, including from outside the United States, and ended in victory when the state dropped its frame-up efforts. None of the five served jail time.

In October 2001, said Richter, paperworkers in Brevard County, North Carolina, went on strike "in the face of company threats to close the plant unless the workers agreed to concessions that would have gutted the union contract. They stood their ground to the end even though the owner eventually closed the plant in 2002."

Socialist workers also participated in battles for Black rights, which play a weighty role in the area, said Richter. They included the campaign launched by the South Carolina NAACP against the flying of the Confederate battle flag on the grounds of the South Carolina state house, to the 5,000-strong demonstration in Greenville, South Carolina, in May of this year to demand that Greenville County make Martin Luther King's Birthday a paid holiday.

The economic depression, which is affecting working people in the United States and around the world, has had a big impact in the Carolinas. Tens of thousands of workers have lost their jobs as more than 100 textile plants in North Carolina and almost 60 in South Carolina have closed since 1997. This is the context of Pillowtex's threats of closure.

Socialist workers were part of the discussion among unionists and other workers at the giant plant. "We put forward the need to fight for a shorter work week with no cut in pay to spread around the available work and for a massive public workers program" to fight unemployment, Richter said.

In the midst of the economic crisis and rising unemployment, workers continue to find their way to the unions, Richter noted. In Tar Heel, North Carolina, a 10-year fight for recognition of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union continues at Smithfield. The plant is the largest pork-processing facility in the world, with 6,000 workers.

During the discussion, a worker from a nearby auto parts plant asked "what is the difference between socialism and communism. I've always heard negative things about communism." She had read in the *Salisbury Post* about Connie Allen's write-in campaign for U.S. Senate. She came by the bookstore a couple of months ago and picked up a copy of *New International* no. 7, with the feature article, "The Opening Guns of World War III."

This time, she took full advantage of the bookstore's closing sale. All stock was marked down by 50 percent. She bought *Teamster Power* and *Teamster Politics* by Farrell Dobbs, *Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women* by Evelyn Reed, Joseph Hansen, and Mary-Alice Waters, *Socialism on Trial* by James P. Cannon, and *New International* no. 10.

A Pillowtex worker decided on the Spanish-language edition of *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes and *Nueva Internacional* no. 5, with the article "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War" by the same author.

SWP branches in Atlanta and Washington, D.C., will continue to pay close attention to political and union developments in the Carolinas as they did from 1997 to 2000. Prior to that the party had offices in Raleigh and then Greensboro for some 20 years.

Militant/Connie Allen

Above: members of Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) from locals in North Carolina and Los Angeles picket alongside workers at Hollander Home Fashions plant in Tignall, Georgia, April 20, 2001. Left: march in Columbia, South Carolina, Jan. 21, 2002, to demand the removal of the Confederate battle flag from state grounds.

LETTERS

No Israeli concessions

It is my opinion that the article in the June 16 issue entitled "Tel Aviv makes concessions to Palestinians to bloc with Washington in targeting Iran," should have more correctly been titled "Tel Aviv and Washington seek to pacify the Palestinian people's struggle in order to target Iran." As is, the article leaves you with an impression that is not borne out by the facts or even by the content.

Comrade Malapanis makes the point that the "peace" plan calls for the formation of a Palestinian state on the condition that the Palestinian Authority cracks down on the groups Washington considers as "terrorists." Nothing new here! Where is the concession here? This does not even go as far as previous agreements and discussions that Washington was a part of, such as Oslo or Camp David II. A Palestinian state where? Somewhere in the territories occupied in 1967, the borders will be figured out later. The real content of the Road Map is part 2 which is the demand on the Palestinian Authority to crack down on the resistance to the Israeli occupation. Washington and Tel Aviv believe that the U.S. imperialist occupation of Iraq will so demoralize the Palestinian people that Washington's unsavory proposals will be swallowed and an obstacle to imperialism's domination will be removed.

In addition, Sharon, as Malapanis points out, rejects any negotiations on the fate of the 4 million refugees and has placed numerous other objections.

The fact of the matter is that the closures, i.e. the siege, of Palestinian population centers continue. The settlement activities continue unabated, the only settlements targeted by Sharon so far are a few empty trailers that even his government considers as illegal. The moves against the latter were more for international public consumption and have no effect on the ground.

Had Tel Aviv lifted the siege, had Tel Aviv agreed to dismantle real settlements, had Tel Aviv agreed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state without ifs, ands, or buts, then we could have talked of concessions. Indications are that the Palestinian masses have not seen anything positive in the so-called concessions provided by Sharon's government and are not about to put aside their struggle.

The fact is that the concessions are by a Palestinian Authority demoralized by Washington's victory in Iraq and hoping that by placing Abu Mazen as prime minister, a man Washington was favorable to, a bone would be thrown to the Palestinians. It is another step in the disorientation of the bourgeoisified PLO leadership.

A point on the Lebanese organization Hezbollah: This is an organization that was part of a decades-long popular resistance to Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon and also resistance to attempts by Washington and Tel Aviv to foist a brazenly pro-imperialist regime in Beirut. They were part of a victory by the Arab masses against the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and also against a U.S. military expeditionary force in 1982–83 that had been sent to shore up the Phalangist government in Beirut. They thus stand as a bad example that must be removed. Their close relations to the Tehran regime continues to be a source of much consternation in imperialist circles. For that reason too they must be eliminated as Washington escalates its hostility towards Iran. Hezbollah has not claimed to have carried out actions inside Israel or outside of Lebanon. They have also not targeted Israeli civilians for suicide bombings.

Of course, a victory by Washington against the Iranian people would also be a terrible blow against the Palestinians. The article by Malapanis states that concessions were given to the Palestinians in order to be able to target Iran. We must make sure that we do not leave the impression that the Palestinians may somehow gain something out of Washington's hostility to the Iranian people.

Georges Mehrabian
Athens, Greece

Morgan or History Channel?

I read the article in the June 16, 2003 issue about Engels's *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State.* In Lewis Morgan's *Ancient Society* there are mentioned the three ages of humankind: savagery, barbarism, and civilization, and how women were treated equally on account of the fact that there was no dominant patriarchy.

But I was watching a documentary on the History Channel which claimed there was archaeological evidence in Neanderthal burial sites that males were buried upright with pottery, food, and other artifacts for the afterlife, but that females were *not* buried this way. The conclusion was that, contrary to modern-day assertions that Neanderthal women were treated equally, such was not the case and they were treated poorly, on account of the fact that one could conclude that how a society buries its members also directly represents how that same society treats its living.

So, who is right? Lewis Morgan or the History Channel? Also, in the age of barbarism, Egyptian society was male-dominated, because the Pharaohs were all men.

Tom Lobello
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

THE MILITANT

Ontario strikers resist pension cuts

BY ELVIDIO MEJIA AND PATRICIA O'BEIRNE

SUDBURY, Ontario—Some 3,500 workers walked off the job and set up picket lines at midnight May 31 outside Inco's nickel mine in Sudbury and at its refinery in Port Colbourne, east of Toronto. The strike, by the United Steelworkers (USWA) Local 6500, has shut down the largest nickel-mining operation of the Canadian mining giant. It affects about one-third of the company's workforce and half its nickel capacity.

Inco mines, mills, and refines about 9 percent of the world's nickel, a base metal used especially in the production of stainless steel. The operation in Sudbury, a city four hours north of Toronto, produced 226 million pounds of nickel and 230 million pounds of copper in 2002.

On the day before the strike the workers voted to reject the company's contract offer by almost 95 percent. Nine out of 10 union members cast a vote.

Contract talks had begun on April 7. A range of issues were in dispute, including pensions and vacation time and pay. Negotiations broke down after the bosses insisted on measures attacking health-care benefits for current employees, retirees, and survivors—family members who are entitled to receive benefits after a worker dies.

The strike halted production at Sudbury, although the bosses used helicopters to ferry nonunion staff across the picket line to carry out maintenance. On June 3 company officials announced that they would not be able to meet some contracts for nickel, copper, and cobalt.

On June 17 a court injunction went into effect forcing the union to allow the bosses to bring in 1,100 non-union workers.

The union is demanding that Inco drop demands for concessions in health-care benefits and increase the lifetime pension for workers over age 65 by 10 percent. Under this proposal, employees with more than 30 years of experience would see their monthly check raised from $3,000 to $3,300.

Wayne Fraser, director of USWA district 6, said May 29 that the company has refused to confirm that it will withdraw "concessions affecting current and future retirees and …will not reduce health-care benefits. Inco is still holding on to concessions affecting seniority and is refusing to address increases in the minimum pension."

The health-care takebacks include halving the entitlement for dental visits from twice to once a year. The Inco bosses also want to force all active and retired workers to go to the same company-approved pharmacist and optometrist.

Pensions a key issue in the strike

Pensions are a key issue for the workers, 45 percent of whom are eligible to retire within three years. The company has pleaded poverty in the face of the union demands, claiming a shortfall in its pension funds of US$802 million (US$1 = Can$1.36).

Militant/Elvidio Mejia

Steelworkers, on strike since May 31, picket Inco nickel mine in Sudbury, Ontario.

Speaking to *Militant* reporters during a picket-line visit, workers firmly rejected any notion that they should be made to pay for the pension shortfall. "We say, it's not our fault, it's your fault what happened to the pension fund—the company has to bail itself out," said Shane Cusack, a union steward who has worked at Inco for two years.

"They're trying to take away benefits that previous workers fought for. A lot of the young guys are out here fighting because our forefathers fought for the benefits we have," said Keith Bona, 30, who has worked at Inco's Copper Cliff south mine for two and a half years.

"If they want us back, they're going to have to share the wealth," said striker Shirley Brown, a worker with 29 years experience.

The production and maintenance workers in Sudbury are being joined on the picket line by some of Inco's 10,000 retirees. Wayne Stonehouse, 57, said that Inco awakened "a sleeping giant" when it attempted to slash health-care benefits.

The company withdrew its proposed health-care management program the day workers voted to reject the company's offer, but Stonehouse said he doesn't believe it's "off the table" for good.

Stonehouse said he's had to access the health benefits a lot after being "all screwed up from working in the mines." He had two heart attacks on the job and suffers from emphysema, even though he doesn't smoke.

Elvidio Mejia is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union at Maple Leaf Foods in Burlington, Ontario. Patricia O'Beirne is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Toronto.

Scotland ban on pro-Irish marches defeated

BY CAROLINE BELLAMY

WISHAW, Scotland—More than 300 supporters of the fight for a united Ireland marched through this Lanarkshire town June 14, pushing back a nine-month effort by cops, rightists, and the local government to stop their action. In January a similar parade was banned by the local council only hours before it was due to start.

Surrounded by stewards and then by police, the Crossmaglen Patriots Republican Flute Band from Wishaw played for almost two hours as they marched. "Today has been absolutely fantastic," said David Weir, a central leader of the band at a celebratory social that evening. "Nobody can turn round now and say we can't march on our streets! I'm so proud of every one of you—let's leave with our heads held high."

"We're entitled to march the same as them," said Lorna Slavin, a hospital cleaner who was taking part in her first march. "Them" referred to the pro-British, anti-Catholic Orange Order and associated bands who frequently hold marches in Wishaw, including in Craigneuk, a predominantly Catholic area.

The successful parade scored a victory in the fight by those of Irish origin in Scotland for full equality and the right to publicly assert their political identification with the struggle for a united Ireland. Following mass migration to Scotland's central belt in the wake of the great Irish famine of the 1840s, bosses were able to institute a caste-like system of job discrimination. More highly skilled, better paid jobs were reserved for Protestant workers.

"We originally applied to march, with all the seven bands in the West of Scotland Republican Bands Alliance, last September," said Weir, a roofer. "We didn't expect any problems—the other Republican bands hold local parades. But the council raised nine objections to the route.

The January march—called to commemorate the 31st anniversary of Bloody Sunday, the day on which the British Army shot and killed 14 unarmed civil rights demonstrators in Derry, Ireland—was banned at the last minute after police claimed they had received a "threat of significant disorder." "This time we were called to a meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Friday night," continued Weir. "The police said again that they had information that big trouble was planned from 'both sides.' I told them we have the right to march the same as anyone else, and that we could guarantee there would be no trouble from the band. After an hour and a half, councillors took a closed vote and gave the go-ahead. I think it was because we told them that if they banned this march we would just apply again."

Cops were out in force on the day of the event, deploying seven divisions partly in riot gear, two vans of dogs, 10 police on horses, and two ambulances. "They're trying to make us look like we're something dangerous," one demonstrator commented.

The declining strength of Unionism in Ireland, and consequently Scotland, was reflected in the organized opposition to the march. There was one protest of about 30 loyalists (those "loyal" to the "union" of Britain with Northern Ireland) waving Union Jack flags with pictures of British monarch Elizabeth Windsor and shouting anti-Irish abuse. There were also a couple of small groups shouting and giving fascist salutes outside loyalist pubs.

"The loyalists swore an oath that we'd never walk down Main Street," said Padraig O'Caisdie, a joiner who has a long association with Republican bands in Wishaw. "This march today means everything to me."

"We haven't won yet, though," said Weir. "We still want a parade with all seven bands going through Wishaw, and we won't be happy until we get that. And we will get it."

UN plan delays vote on W. Sahara sovereignty

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—On May 23 United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan presented a report to the UN Security Council on the decolonization of Western Sahara. The council has extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum (MINURSO) in Western Sahara to July, while the council considers this report.

Annan's report recommends the implementation of a "peace plan" drafted by his envoy, James Baker, former U.S. secretary of state. Annan claims the proposal is a compromise between an earlier framework agreement, which would have placed Western Sahara as an autonomous region under the control of Morocco, and the 1989 settlement plan, which included a referendum where the Sahrawi people would vote on their status, backed by Polisario.

The Polisario Front, founded in 1973, has led the fight for the national liberation of Western Sahara first against Spanish rule, and then against the Moroccan and Mauritanian invasion of their land after Spain's withdrawal in 1975. Polisario's forces defeated Mauritania's troops in 1979 and forced their departure. The war against Moroccan occupation continued until a UN-brokered ceasefire was signed in 1989, which produced the settlement plan.

The latest report comes in the wake of Annan's moves in February last year to force a "take-it-or-leave-it" resolution to the conflict. Baker prepared the "framework agreement" in 2001 offering "autonomy" to Western Sahara while allowing the Moroccan government to continue its occupation, basically scuttling the settlement plan. Washington and Paris hope that giving a new face to the Moroccan occupation will defuse the Sahrawi liberation struggle and allow them to maintain imperialist control over the phosphate-rich area.

Morocco is due to sign a free-trade agreement with Washington by the end of the year.

The Sahrawi people have a decades-long record of fighting against imperialist domination and championing the position that the natural resources of the country are the patrimony of the Sahrawis, which the imperialist powers view as a threat to their interests in the region.

The earlier settlement plan had been agreed to by both Morocco and the Polisario Front. The plan provided for a referendum on colonialism or independence for Western Sahara. Morocco consistently blocked implementation of this plan, with U.S. backing. In December 1999 the United Nations published a list of 86,425 identified voters. Morocco has since filed 131,000 appeals, delaying the referendum for years.

The new "peace plan" proposes a period of four years of autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty followed by a referendum that would include those resident in Western Sahara since 1999. In response to the Baker plan, Polisario outlined the many perils for the Sahrawi people during the autonomy period, as it is proposed, and the problem of the new criteria for eligibility to vote in a referendum. The Moroccan occupiers moved 170,000 Moroccans into Western Sahara in September 1991 and another 50,000 in January 1998, and they now want to give the right to vote to many of these settlers.

Mohamed Abdelaziz, president of the Sahrawi Republic, told the Polisario Front's 30th anniversary celebrations in the refugee camps in Algeria, "After 30 years of struggle, fighting, and sacrifices, and 12 years of the UN Settlement Plan, the Polisario Front, which abhors terrorism and intimidation, will remain strongly behind its lofty objectives and principles, including to enable the people of Western Sahara alone to exercise freely their right to vote for freedom, self-determination, and independence."

According to a Sahara Press Service report, Abdelaziz emphasized that the goal of the ceasefire was to hold a referendum on self-determination. "The Sahrawis can go back to arms if such goal is not realized," he pointed out.